



ROVING  
THROUGH  
SOUTHERN  
CHINA

HARRY A. FRANCK











The West knows China's great unconquered tribe by the insulting Chinese name of "Lolo"

# ROVING THROUGH SOUTHERN CHINA

BY

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"Vagabonding Down the Andes," "Working  
North from Patagonia," "Wandering in  
Northern China," etc., etc.

ILLUSTRATED WITH 171 UNUSUAL  
PHOTOGRAPHS BY THE AUTHOR  
WITH A MAP SHOWING HIS ROUTE



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REARWARD THROUGH  
WESTERN CHINA

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To  
MY MOTHER

WHOSE ONLY ROVING WAS HER YEAR  
WITH US IN SOUTHERN CHINA



## FOREWORD

In the famous, if sometimes disappointing, story of his travels, Marco Polo divides what we call China into two almost separate countries, naming that of the north "Cathay" and that of the south "Manji." While there is no exact Mason and Dixon line in modern China, there are distinct differences between the two sections of the country, shading into one another about midway between the Hoang Ho and the Yang Tze Kiang. Foreigners are prone to consider the latter the dividing-line, and there have been political tendencies of that kind in China itself; but unless we make a third division and call it Central China, as many do, the Yang Tze region has much more in common with the south than with the north. About the time he crosses the thirty-fourth parallel of latitude the southbound traveler in China will note an almost sudden change: camels, donkeys, Peking carts and the grassless, treeless, dust-blown north give way to water-buffaloes, traveling-chairs, and narrow flagstone roads meandering among endless flooded paddy-fields, a greener if not a cleaner land of many waterways but without wheeled vehicles, except here and there creaking wheelbarrows competing with perpetual trains of coolie carriers. The real line of cleavage is where *kaoliang*, wheat, and millet cease and rice culture begins, for though Honan and Shensi were almost the cradle of the Chinese race, and it is hardly a millennium since much of the south was conquered from its perhaps aboriginal tribes, the contrasts between the two sections derive less from a difference in the people than from the demands of the dominant crops.

This volume is concerned with my almost random roving through what Marco Polo called "Manji," as its companion, "Wandering in Northern China," was concerned with "Cathay." As in the case of that simple tale, I have done nothing more than to go and see what personally interested me, an average individual with no particular bent for the scientific or the statistical, nor with an ax to grind, and, since even a vagabond must show some excuse for his existence in these energetic times, to try to bring that home as intact as possible, in the hope that it may interest others of the same normal tastes. At the worst this perhaps too circumstanced narrative should serve as an

antidote to an over-indulgence in newspaper accounts of present-day China and remind the reader that though to the journalist a sudden uprising, a single killing, is "news," the placid, every-day existence that has gone on for months or years before and will continue for years afterward is the truer state of affairs.

Great minds will no doubt find in the following pages much that is trivial, many mere details of life that may seem to them without importance or significance; these should turn instead to the masterpieces of the ultra-modern school, of those other confessedly great minds among our younger generation who know so exactly what is the matter with the world to-day that they have only to sit cerebrating over their boot-leg at home and tell us how to fix it. Being of an older generation I may have missed many big things in giving too much attention to those of seemingly slight consequence, but—well, I once saw a "bell-hop" in a Washington hotel who was far more interesting than the senator about whose door he hovered.

Some finical readers may accuse me of being too realistic; it has happened before. But I am more interested in setting down a record of plain facts than of producing "literature." There has been too much glossing over of the truth since the days of Marco Polo; our misconceptions of China are as much due to the efforts of gentle-minded souls to show it as a pacific and refined society contrasting in every way with our own brutal and incoherent civilization as they are to the maudlin melodramatic inanities of "best sellers," and it is through the atmosphere which successive generations of these two equally inexact schools have created that much of the world at large sees China to this day. The matter-of-fact middle ground has been much less cultivated. To call a spade a shovel, or leave it out of the field of vision entirely, may make the picture more attractive, but I am always primarily interested in the life of the masses, and not to insist on the filth, the incessant noise, the sometimes deadening heat, and the disagreeable as well as the pleasant habits of the people of China would be to give a false report, for they are omnipresent.

Any attempt to "cover" southern China must result in a labyrinthine route, and for the sake of clarity I have not followed exactly the order of my journeys; but this can do no other harm than here and there to make a break in seasons. My wanderings in the Far East included not only all China and its semi-dependencies but all the Japanese Empire and the five divisions of French Indo-China; those, however, are other stories. The portion herein set forth is the account of more than a year

of almost incessant travel, and if the territory covered seems comparatively small, it is because nowhere are the means of transportation slower than in southern China. Some of our friends at home got the notion that because I took my family with me to China I had only a quiet domestic life there. As a matter of fact, when we came to cast up accounts upon our return we found that we had been 928 days outside the United States and that during that time I had been 435 days absent from the family circle.

In any country one must get off the "beaten track" to see the real life of the people, and must pick up at least a smattering of their language in order to make even that much worth while. This is doubly true in China because of the peculiar situation of foreigners in that land. No doubt it is more to the discredit of the foreigner than to the Chinese themselves that we are to a certain degree despised, sometimes hated, in the treaty-ports where we live in numbers and beyond which nine out of ten travelers never get, yet where about that percentage of the population of the country as a whole are quite different, especially in their attitude toward "outside barbarians." In the main the Chinese are more surly, or at least less friendly, toward us, farthest from their natural courteous selves, in proportion to their familiarity with us, so that to get a true valuation of the Celestial one must go out into the less foreign-trodden parts of the country. This intensive traveling may at times result in monotony. But though the Chinese are approximately alike from Manchuria to Yünnan, there are so many local differences, even short distances apart, that a life-time of wandering and all the films produced by the kodak trust could not glean them all. Almost every acre, if not every human being, in China has something new to show the leisurely visitor; yet, curiously, on the other hand, millions of them seem as exactly alike as medals struck from a single matrix. One of the reasons why that ancient land is so well worth intensive scrutiny is that while customs on the whole may be similar everywhere, hand-work and lack of quick and easy transportation, the conservatism of Confucianism blended with the desire of every Chinese family always to remain in the same place, make innumerable differences in the details of life, in contrast to the deadly standardized sameness of our own land of quantity production and nation-wide advertising, where one must shake the head hard to remember, as he walks along the same identical street, past the same identical shops, dodging the same identical automobiles, whether he is in Portland, Maine, or in San Diego.

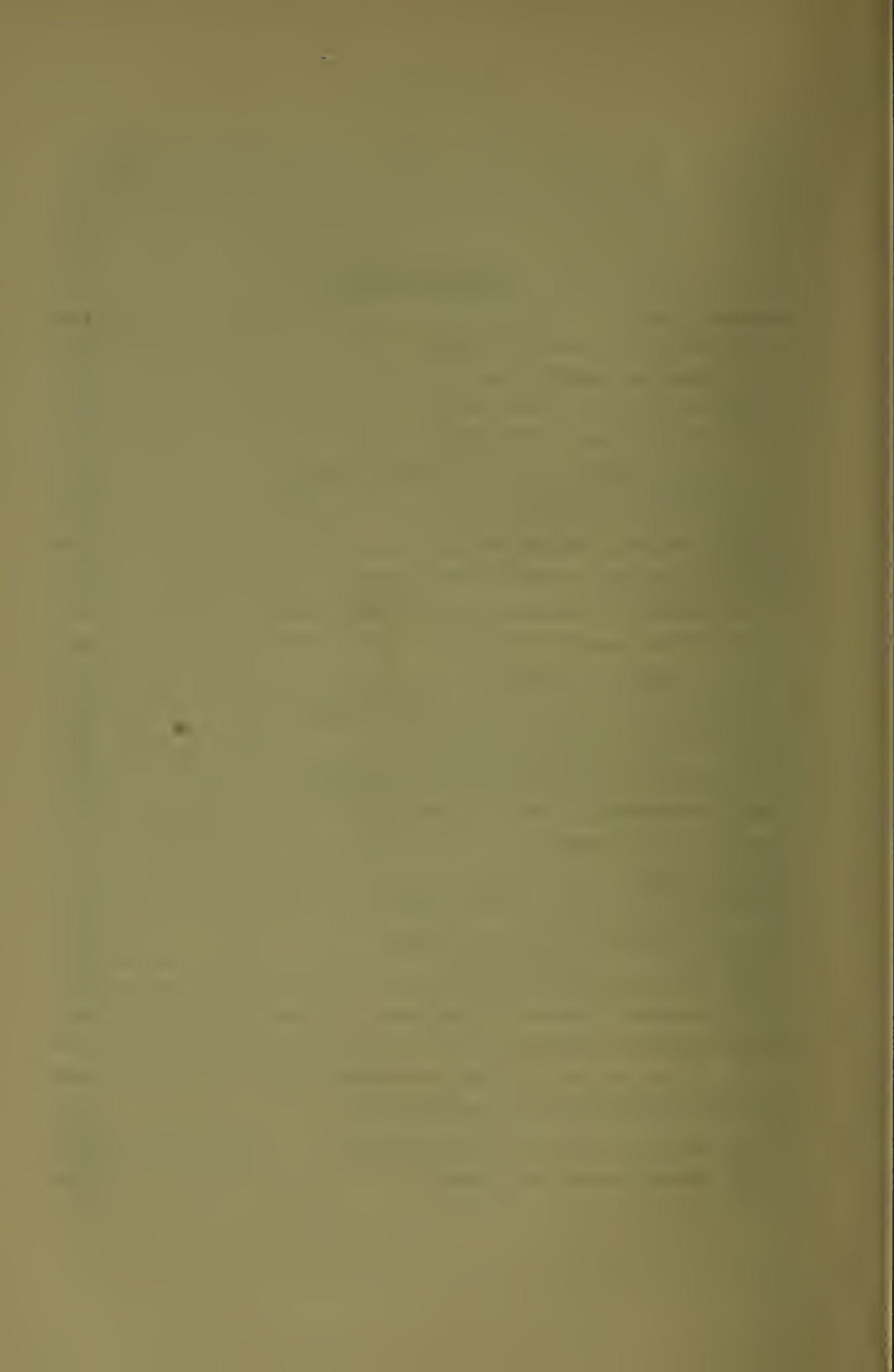
During our two years in China, political chaos, virtual anarchy, incessant lawlessness and banditry reigned. Many were the solemn world investigators of various nationalities who shied past that troubled land without entering. No doubt there were many dangers; in a sense violence threatens all foreigners in the interior of present-day China. But even at home one does not keep to the house because of the not inconsiderable perils of the streets and highways. Having visited every one of the eighteen provinces of China proper, most of them extensively, often entirely alone for weeks except for a Chinese servant, missing only one provincial capital, and that mainly by choice, never once varying an itinerary or dodging a route that promise of interest laid out for me, and never once having been in the slightest degree mishandled, it may be that I have not a fitting sense of the dangers of life in the once Celestial Empire. When I further recall that my wife and two small children, accompanied during the last year by my mother, visited nine of those eighteen provinces, lived in out-of-the-way corners of several of its troubled cities, roamed their streets by night as well as by day, without ever being wilfully molested, I am forced to the conclusion that on the whole life in China is not so perilous, at least to us of the West, as in many Western lands. Yet that would not be the exact truth either, any more than would an opinion based exclusively on the hectic head-lines from China during the past few years. For there has really been much trouble in China; the only reasonable way I can account for never once getting into it during all my foolhardy by-way wandering there is to lay it to my abominable luck, which has always made it impossible for me to have adventures with spice in them even in the very places and almost at the very times when others far less eager for them were having much more than their share. The only other possible conclusion is too unflattering to be admitted,—that the swarming outlaws with whom I undoubtedly sometimes came in contact never molested me, any more than have their fellows during my many years of out-of-the-way prowling in other troubled lands, because I never look like ready money.

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Chestnut Hill, Pa.  
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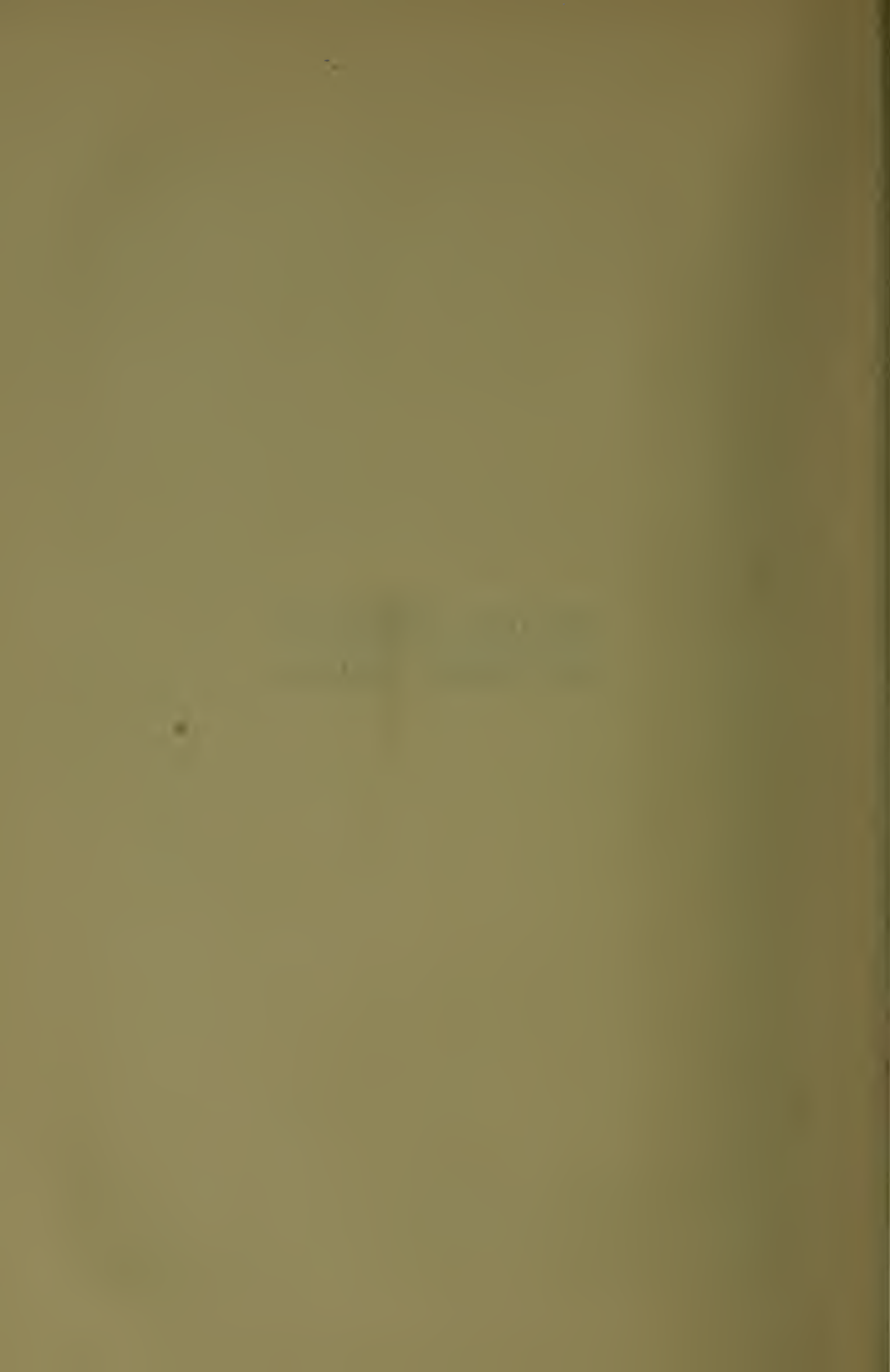
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ROVING THROUGH  
SOUTHERN CHINA



# ROVING THROUGH SOUTHERN CHINA

## CHAPTER I

### SHANGHAI BY THE BACK DOOR

**T**O the roving American who enters it from within China, after more than a year of wandering in the northern part of that overpopulated land, Shanghai seems at first glimpse about as interesting as Omaha or Memphis. Here are the same dismal railroad yards, a strangely familiar station, dingy with age and jostling with hurried travelers; the streets, with their jangling, screeching tram-cars, honking automobiles oblivious of the rights of pedestrians, their narrow sidewalks further cluttered by trolley-poles, might also be the back streets of any second-class American city. Many a modern building in Shanghai is hardly recognizable from thousands at home; Bubbling Well Road turns out to be picturesque only in name; the vista down Nanking Road through the two great Chinese department stores forming its pillars of Hercules has so few hints of the exotic that a wandering-minded individual must pinch himself to realize that he is still in the Orient.

But if he happens also to be one of those queer fellows who are given to going beyond the main street and the principal hotels, he will find that there is much that is typically Chinese even in the very heart of foreign-ruled Shanghai, though few of the alien residents with which the city teems seem to be aware of it. If one were not already prepared for it by decades of roaming in other lands, perhaps the most astonishing thing about China's greatest treaty-port would be the lack of knowledge of, or interest in, things Chinese among the great mass of its foreign residents. The majority of the business men who make up so large a proportion of that element seem to be there frankly to make money, and to do their best to have as little contact with the

Chinese as possible. Some are visibly fearful of being Sinofied, of being swamped by the human masses about them, of loosening their grip on the ways of their homeland—as if it would be any fatal misfortune to change a bit from the platitudinous life of the average American or European business man to the different, but surely as intelligent and as happy, existence of the Chinese. Some openly scorn that ancient people, just as they would “the natives” of any other foreign land among whom they happened temporarily to have cast their lot, and are open to nothing concerning them, unless it affects their own income and business success. The majority, perhaps, are men without intellectual curiosity, while those particularly from our own land have that love of creature comforts which makes it impossible for the average individual among them to risk himself wherever a heated and carpeted room and an upholstered chair are not awaiting him.

Thus the normal American assigned to the Shanghai office of his firm or going into business there for himself rents as nearly an American house or apartment as he can get, near a trolley-line if he is still below the automobile scale, and settles down into the narrow rut of Western existence amid the more or less Occidental comforts that several short generations of foreign business men have caused to grow up in what the outside world misconceives to be China’s most important city. His office is as much like the offices of his homeland as he can make it; at noon he gathers, almost exclusively with his own fellow-countrymen, in his club, an almost exact copy of similar gatherings at home, even to that platitudinous atmosphere of hilarious school-boys crossed with booming real-estate agents, except that the more or less slight sense of secrecy in the matter of strong drink is replaced by an almost ostentatious publicity, as if he would impress upon himself and all who behold him that here at least is one advantage to soften his bitter exile. When his business day is over he is trolleyed or chauffeured home, or out to the country club, plays a round of golf, a set of tennis, or rides an hour on horseback—recognizing another advantage in the cheapness of horse-flesh. He dines, at home, club, or foreign hotel as nearly in the homeland style as carefully instructed Chinese cooks and “boys” can accomplish, and settles down to the home newspapers and magazines, preferably the papers, though they are seldom less than a month old, to end up perhaps at one of the few theaters offering poor Western vaudeville interspersed with mediocre motion-pictures. Particularly on Saturday or Sunday night, or a holiday, he can probably be found in one of

the many gaudy establishments posing as innocent cabarets that are scattered mainly about the French concession, where jazz "music," hard liquor, and girls for the most part Russian reign in inextricable entanglement.

In like manner the Englishman, the Frenchman, the now returning German, even the Japanese, remake everywhere instinctively, like exiled insects, a fragment of England, France, the Fatherland, or Dai Nippon, each nationality constructing places in which to live, work, and play without any attention to the fact that many customs which are logical in their own lands are in China absurd. There is so little intercourse between the various national groups of foreigners engaged in commerce that shops or offices side by side keep most of their national characteristics intact. Your typical foreigner in business in Shanghai, or anywhere in China, for that matter, seems to feel that he must conform to type, if he is not naturally typical, lest he be rated eccentric by his fellows, so that he makes it almost a point of honor to come into the least possible contact with the Chinese, with the subordinates in his office only professionally, with his house and club servants, his grooms, caddies, tennis-ball chasers—no self-respecting foreigner in China would any more dream of pursuing his tennis-balls beyond the foul-line than of driving his own car—in the same superficial, impersonal way that he does with the throngs or a chance rickshaw-man on the few westernized streets along which he passes from office to club. Almost any tendency to deviate from the imported national ways is frowned upon in any foreign group. If your American resident begins to lose interest in the accepted round of his fellows, to drift into hobnobbing with the Chinese, to doubt the absolute efficacy of plate-glass-topped desks and speedy, aggressive selling methods, he will probably find himself buttonholed by a well-meaning group of his fellow-citizens with the advice, "Young man, you 've missed too many boats; you ought to go home and get pepped up."

Though he is much better paid than the missionaries, or perhaps because he is, the normal Westerner in business in China scorns not only to know his clients but to learn their language, leaving it to his Chinese comprador to be the go-between, the one to acquire a foreign tongue and master the details of foreign ways, to improve *his* mental equipment by the efforts necessary thereto, while the merchant confines himself to the obvious, English-speaking side of his business. Where the missionary spends half his energy in learning to speak Chinese well, the *avé*rage man of commerce considers that he has ac-

complished something worthy of praise if he learns "pidgin English." One result of this policy, or lack thereof, is that not a few compradors become richer than the men from overseas for whom they act as intermediaries; another is that many a business man leaves China toward the end of life or of his shorter term of service there with a mind more narrow than he would have acquired during a similar period at home, because he has been actively rather than only passively engaged in barring from it anything outside his own specialty. Yet how often does the repatriated Shanghai merchant consider himself, or at least allow himself to be considered, to quote the local paper of his admiring home-town, "our great authority on China"? Far from being that, he is often devoid of any real knowledge of China or Chinese problems, except as they have cropped up in his bills of lading, if indeed his mind is not a mess of the popular prejudices and common inaccuracies on the people amid, yet not among, whom he has spent much of his life. Thus it is not among our merchants, long as they may have been established in China, that one is most likely to find that accurate information with which to check up one's own impressions, but among the missionaries, the great majority of whom actually do live in China during their time there.

Far be it from me to assert that this is the universal round of the foreign business element in Shanghai; much less would I testify verbatim to the caustic summary of a fellow-national of longer experience there, that "Shanghai consists of a lot of vulgar foreigners living beyond their means." For there are exceptions to all rules, often numerous, sometimes notable exceptions. Several times in a blue moon the inquiring, hypercurious wanderer may run across a man of commerce, outwardly quite like his fellows, who is an inexhaustible store of information on China and the Chinese. Some there are whose very calling requires a wide interest in the people about them; some, retaining that social curiosity so prone to wear off early in life, could not suppress such an interest if they tried. But they are not in the majority; nay, I have met adult children of foreign business men who were born and have spent most of their lives in Shanghai, yet who have never really been in China. That is, they have never set foot in the Chinese city, just across the street from the foreign settlement; when they have gone to the foreign school at this or that treaty-port, to Kuling up the Yang Tze or to some other foreign summer resort, they have traveled by foreign steamers, and have grown to man's or woman's estate without once having spent a day on native-ruled



Chinese soil. I have met geniuses among these Shanghai-born who cannot say "yes" or "no" in the Shanghai dialect, much less in real Chinese. The cards are stacked against them. The Shanghai American School enumerates among its advantages the fact that it teaches its nearly all China-born pupils no Chinese whatever, neither the language, the history, the arts, the classics, nor any other thing concerning mankind's oldest surviving civilization; more than that, it forbids pupils to speak Chinese among themselves on the school premises, though to some of them from the interior this is more familiar than English, and many are planning to spend their lives in China. Possibly all this is quite as it should be; I am only a reporter, not a judge. But at least it seemed different enough from what one to whom the world resembles a single entity expected, to be worth the reporting.

The term "Shanghai" is misleading to those not familiar with conditions there. To some the name means the valueless land set aside for foreign residence when this port was opened by treaty to foreigners in 1843 and on which in less than a century there has grown up an important modern city, a metropolitan area which almost every nation in the world, except China, has some part in governing, a city quite distinct from China. The name is more commonly used perhaps, at least by foreigners, to designate an entire group of cities. The original Shanghai is a Chinese city still partly walled and more than two thousand years old, an important trading center more than a millennium ago, and around this and the foreigners' portion modern developments have caused other Chinese cities to grow up, some bordering so immediately on the settlement that it is sometimes impossible to tell where one city begins and another ends. This vast area, with an estimated population of three or four million, is what probably most often answers to the name of Shanghai.

Though it is the fashion among those who know the interior of China to be scornful of it, one can find the genuinely Chinese in what is known as the native city of Shanghai, the old, once walled, original city. In fact it is in this and lesser treaty-ports, where the quarters of the Europeans rub elbows with the Chinese sections, that the contrasts of the two civilizations stand out most clearly, where one feels the widely different essences of the East and the West and realizes that they can no more mix than oil and water, that they might remain forever side by side without serious interpenetration. It was almost twenty years since my first hasty visit to Shanghai,

yet the native city was essentially the same. True, slow public executions in its noisome little squares seemed no longer to be in vogue; nor did I again meet coolies worming their way through the noisy, milling crowd with dainty silk-clad ladies with tiny bound feet seated on their shoulders. One feels decidedly in China in those narrow cobbled streets along which even rickshaws cannot make their way, though the foreign tram lines penetrate the native city and automobiles honk their way down a few widened streets. But if some of the streets are wider now, and there has even been a half-hearted attempt at sanitation, bound feet are only relatively fewer as they toddle along in No. 2 American shoes; there are still the long narrow vistas of upright red signboards in gilded letters before gaudy open shop-fronts; the handicrafts of China still go on publicly in the same wide-open shallow shops or out in a semi-quiet eddy of the swarming streets themselves; the same joss-burning temples, the howling fairs, festivals, funerals, and fantan houses are still there; whining, diseased, sometimes self-mutilated beggars crawl or sprawl among the eddying crowds; smallpox patients stroll nonchalantly past. Booths and outdoor shops offering all manner of gaily colored, flimsy things of no real use—for a poverty-stricken people the Chinese squander great sums on worthless trinkets—dirty tea-houses and dilapidated temples set in the midst of greenish slimy lakes, the constant surging of crowds noisy beyond all necessity, all carry the mind back to cities hundreds of miles beyond foreign concessions and their immediate influence. For one who can see nothing more of China than Shanghai, the native city need not be disdained; it is at least to China as a whole what a five-cent abridgment is to a classic in several volumes.

Contrary to the naïve notion of many Americans, however, the Chinese of Shanghai do not live exclusively in the Chinese city. In fact if all those even purely of the Celestial race were removed from the foreign concessions, the foreigners left would rattle about in them like a handful of dried peas in a cavalry-boot. Indeed, they would probably soon rattle off into some adjacent territory, unless the gods should favor them with an immediate passage home, for by themselves the foreign residents are by no means self-contained. They not merely do not grow their own vegetables and kill their own meat; a great proportion of the foreign ladies would be as hard put to it to cook a dinner or sweep out a bedroom as their husbands would be to accomplish single-handed the details of their offices. Coolie draft-animals are still more in evidence along the very Western Bund lined by many



Along the Shanghai Bund human draft-animals contrast with the sights and sounds of a modern Western city



On the outskirts of Shanghai passengers transfer from electric street-cars to an ancient form of Chinese transportation



Makeshift huts and floating hovels house many Chinese just outside the foreign concessions of Shanghai



Ice reaches its farthest south in Ningpo, where it is "grown" on shallow ponds and stored away, no thicker than window-glass, in ice-houses of earth and thatch

up-to-date structures than are Western mechanical processes, for manpower is cheaper even in Shanghai than most of its rivals; thanks to the unlimited reservoir of humanity with which they are surrounded, the foreign family without the minimum of three or four servants is not advertising that curious fact; if there is a business house without at least half a dozen Chinese employees for every foreigner, the chances are that it is not far from a receivership.

But that is only the beginning of the story. What all but swamps the extraordinary conglomeration of people known as "foreigners" who live in and rule the foreign settlement is the fact that it is a city of refuge for the Chinese. In the beginning France, England, and the United States were each given concessions, but in 1863 the British and the Americans combined their holdings into the "international settlement," to which they admitted all foreign nations with equal rights. The French held aloof, and their concession still has a government of its own. Incidentally it is so large that it has more than half the population of international Shanghai and not only contains many of the best British and American residences, as well as those of many other nationalities, but the American civic center that is being built up around the new American church, school, and country club is in French territory. The original idea back of the concessions was to have a place in which the foreigner could live after his own fashion, free from the countless annoyances of Chinese rule. But way back during the Taiping reign of terror the part "set aside for foreign residence" was freely opened to all Chinese, at first perhaps out of real altruism and true hospitality. To-day it seems more than that. The new British banking palace on the Shanghai Bund, not to mention its dozen rivals under several foreign flags, has on its books millions of dollars credited to the political scalawags and military thieves by wholesale of China proper, funds as safe there from recovery by the laborious people from which they were plundered as they would be on the other side of the earth. In fact, so much loot is sent to these foreign banks that some of them charge storage instead of paying interest on it; safety is incentive enough for the depositors, and when good investments turn up the banks naturally give preference to their own funds or to those of investors of their own nationality. When even Chinese patience cracks or the wheel of fortune turns a peg, and one of the buccaneering rascals finds life too stifling for him in his native province, he has merely to flee to the nearest foreign concession to be as safe from his enraged pursuers, though Chinese jurisdiction begins just across the street from his new dwelling,

as is the ill-gotten booty with which he proceeds to finance a new conspiracy or settle down to a luxurious old age.

That is perhaps the only real injustice of the virtually forced appropriation by Western powers of various unimportant parcels of China's vast sovereign territory. It may be that there is nothing unjust in holding for foreign use convenient bits of commercialized land on Chinese soil; there seems no particular reason why a group, even a large international group, of Westerners should not own a portion of a Chinese port, particularly as in many cases it is they who have built it up from little more than a fishing-village. Groups of Chinese hold land in New York, London, and Paris. But the rare privileges of extraterritoriality and the right to hold concessions free from Chinese rule is another matter, and there can be no question that the mere preservation of our present advantageous status, if common justice to China is not reason enough, should keep the foreigner from extending his special privileges to those not entitled to them. The abuse of foreign concessions by any one who can rent or buy a house in them are injustices alike to China and to those perhaps properly entitled to such special forms of protection. The Chinese should be left to stand or fall with his own people. Obviously the official who has a home awaiting him in a near-by place of safety, to which he can flee at the first indication that his government is floundering or that his sins are to be visited upon him, loses a powerful incentive to good governing.

Recent flagrant abuses of the right of refuge by some of China's chief trouble-makers seem to have awakened the foreign authorities at least of Shanghai to the dangers if not the injustice of these things, and it is not impossible that the concessions will some day revert to what they were meant to be. But that time is not yet, and meanwhile, curiously enough, the foreign territories in China remain safety zones even for those who have committed depredations against the nationals of the foreign powers holding them. There is a kind of Spanish hospitality in the concessions scattered about the more accessible parts of China, not so much, one suspects, because those who hold them are above the average in sympathy for the unfortunate and the oppressed, as because rents and real-estate prices rise in proportion as they become places of asylum. Indeed, the suspicion is strong that at least some of the least conscientious powers—if any distinction of that kind can justly be made—maintain their concession chiefly for the fortunes to be made from rascals escaped from pilfering China. It is evidently bad business to close the concessions to any one who has money to spend in them.

One of the victims of the "Lincheng outrage" brought a pet bandit back to Shanghai with him, and the fellow was fêted rather than shot. The Tuchun of Shantung, "dismissed" upon demand of the diplomatic body for not preventing, and possibly conniving at, this crime—but raised in rank, which Peking explained was a printer's error, thereby saving the face both of the diplomats and of the Tuchun—calmly moved into a foreign concession and settled down to live richly on his spoils, though to this day the foreign captives have not yet received a dollar of the compensation the putative Chinese Government so glibly promised. One might suppose that if the Tuchun were so bad a character that several nations demanded such drastic treatment for him, at least he would not be allowed to live comfortably in territory over which they rule, even if he were not arrested and punished there.

Hence it comes about that in the foreign settlements of Shanghai there are many palatial residences owned and occupied by Chinese. Some contain their masters permanently, all adjacent territory being injurious to their precarious state of health; some serve them as homes only in times of stress over the line; not a few are mainly the residences of their French, Italian, or Russian wife among wives. Then there are innumerable Chinese places of business, from up-to-date department stores down through gradations of every size, to the petty money-changer and stall-shop-keeper, which prefer to be safe from the irregularities and confiscations of Chinese rule. So that while the Caucasian face does seem, to eyes long focused on interior China, veritably to swarm in Shanghai, it is by no means in the majority in any genuinely public place, and not in many semi-private ones.

The latest census gives the "foreign population of Shanghai"—that is, all the conglomeration of peoples other than Chinese in the territory ceded to Western powers in 1843—as 21,657, and the Chinese population of that same foreign-ruled district as 827,932! In other words the Chinese outnumber the "foreigners" even in the settlements forty to one; and the further discovery that these Chinese own the bulk of the property, conduct most of the retail trade and are reaching toward supremacy in some previous foreign monopolies, pay considerably more than half the settlement taxes, and still have no right to vote, are not represented on the municipal council, and may be brought to justice only in the Mixed Court presided over by foreigners, brings out the fact that the Shanghai municipality is the antithesis of popular government. Only foreign "rate-payers," barely one per cent of the permanent population, have the vote, and only a small proportion of those who have

the right trouble themselves to exercise it. Though many important questions have come up, the council has failed for several years in its attempt to hold a meeting of the voters. The most insistent appeals have failed to bring a quorum, though that needs only a third of the qualified citizens; there are too many more amusing occupations out of business hours. Curiously, from our Western point of view, the Chinese do not seem to resent their lack of franchise. The vote has never been exercised by Chinese of high or low degree in China; under the "republic," as under the empire, officials are not elected but appointed. The Chinese population of the settlements include some of the wealthiest and most distinguished men of China—for not merely the looters come here, but the honest in search of protection where they can work in peace. Thus there are former statesmen, ex-ambassadors to Western capitals, scores of graduates of American and European universities, men familiar with the best of the modern world, old scholars, famous actors, men of high literary attainments; but because they are Chinese they can have no voice in the government of the settlement. Except among a few political agitators there seems never to have been a protest against this state of affairs. The settlement is ruled by foreigners, but compared with China proper it is well ruled, and that suffices. Many of the Chinese residents evidently prefer it so; they realize the value of foreign protection, as was shown when hundreds of thousands poured into foreign Shanghai during the recent wars near-by.

But what does arouse the ire of the disenfranchised—because this is a matter of losing face—is that they are excluded from the municipal parks for which they are taxed. Office workers would like to come and sit in the Bund park and take the air while watching the doings of one of the busiest harbors in the world; farther out in the residential sections, where white and Japanese and Hindu children play together, yet where no Chinese except the *amas* are admitted—just as a negro mammy can sit in the white section of our Southern street-cars when in charge of a white child—Chinese spectators often line the walks outside the high meshed fences and envy the "foreigners" inside; rich merchants drive slowly past the parks in their limousines in order to hear some of the music of the nightly concerts by the municipal band, and watch destitute Russians and drunken beachcombers pass unchallenged the gates from which they are barred. Time was when the sign read "Dogs and Chinese not admitted"; now it runs more tactfully to the effect that "This space is reserved for members of the foreign community." But the meaning is unchanged, and if the richest and most cultured—grant-



ing that the two could be synonymous—Chinese should appear in his silkiest Chinese full dress, he could not enter, though he were the heaviest taxpayer in the community. Once in a while a Chinese in “foreign” dress gets in, but it is probably because the guards are afraid he might turn out to be a Japanese and his exclusion create an “international complication.”

But the Chinese are forty to one, and the parks are made to accommodate 21,000, not a million. The wealthy Chinese merchant knows that to let every one in would quickly turn the parks into densely crowded garbage-heaps, for the masses are innocent of the most rudimentary notions of sanitation and proper conduct. But the Chinese gentleman and his family are circumspect in their habits, and it seems a pity that some such rule as that which admits high caste natives to the wall in Peking on an equality with foreigners cannot be applied to the parks of Shanghai. It is a sore point with them, much more so than the lack of a vote; Chinese leaders have often denounced the park regulations, but they have seldom protested against their real disenfranchisement. Not merely in the Orient does the unimportant often overshadow the important. But the injustices of foreign concessions is not in such minor matters as reserving parks and playgrounds for the sons of the West, but in the abuse of their “vested interests,” as the chief injustice of extraterritoriality is the protection it affords those who have grown wealthy in supplying munitions for China’s civil wars, and opium and its derivatives to those who should be without them.

Nothing is more natural than that Shanghai should resemble a maelstrom of races. Sikh police and watchmen have long been one of the familiar, yet always incongruous, sights of the place. Relieve them of their multicolored turbans and their great black beards and they lose much of their impressiveness; run across the fact that they are paid only thirty-five “Mex” dollars a month, with but little increase unless they are promoted to positions they seldom reach, and in this age of a single yardstick they are no longer imposing at all, and the haughtiness with which they treat the Chinese becomes but a reaction from their all but servile attitude toward the English-speaking white man. Besides, like so many men, the Sikhs are not picturesque even in full regalia compared with their wives and children, groups of whom may now and then be seen strolling the streets, the women in flimsy gowns that suggest gaily colored shrouds, their noses and ears, fingers and arms, possibly their legs, covered with outlandish Hindu jewelry. Annamese

with black enameled teeth, mushroom hats topping their uniforms, aid French gendarmes in keeping the peace within the French concession; out in the Honkew park district Japanese of both sexes and all ages are numerous—Shanghai claims thirty thousand of them, with everything from paper walls to yoshiwara that Nipponese civilization demands. Koreans who have purposely allowed themselves to be blended into the Chinese mass of the population, so that what would be the contrast of their national costumes is lost, Siamese, Malays, Filipinos, Singhalese—possibly every Oriental people is represented, as is every type of the Caucasian.

Somehow those of our own race seem more sharply cut types than at home, perhaps because they are merely individuals against a great Oriental background. All the gamut of Western humanity is there, from the avowed rounder to those so insistent on their respectability that they deceive not only their fellows but themselves, always filling their pews on Sundays and ready to help with the collection, as if a glimpse of incoming money on the one day when they may not fittingly take it in for themselves assuaged deep-seated regrets. There, too, Mrs. Grundy rides by, in rickshaw or motor-car, nose in air, upholstered within an inch of her life. There is the "flapper," innocently gay with life, or paying bitterly now perhaps for the curiosity that brought her so far afield and left her no alternative than to go farther than mere flappery. There are the immature, in character if not in years, of both sexes, some with visible promise for the future, some with the indeterminate features of those at the parting of the ways, when nature is still undecided whether they are to become average citizens or join the miscreant forces of the earth—the odds slightly favoring the latter in these exotic, miscellaneous surroundings; and, lest all this sound unduly cynical, there are of course the self-respecting and fittingly respected in their due proportion. In other words the Caucasian population of Shanghai is made up of all the elements we find at home, but standing out in somewhat sharper relief against the great contrasting background.

Of late years perhaps the most conspicuous group of foreigners in China's greatest treaty-port are the Russians. There are said to be more than ten thousand of these mainly destitute people, and they include bootblacks, scissor-grinders, public and private beggars, even, say those who have sharper eyes than I, rickshaw-runners. For the past decade they have drifted in month by month from all points of the compass,—overland from Russia, down from Vladivostok on the ships that escaped the "Reds" when they succeeded the Japanese there, from

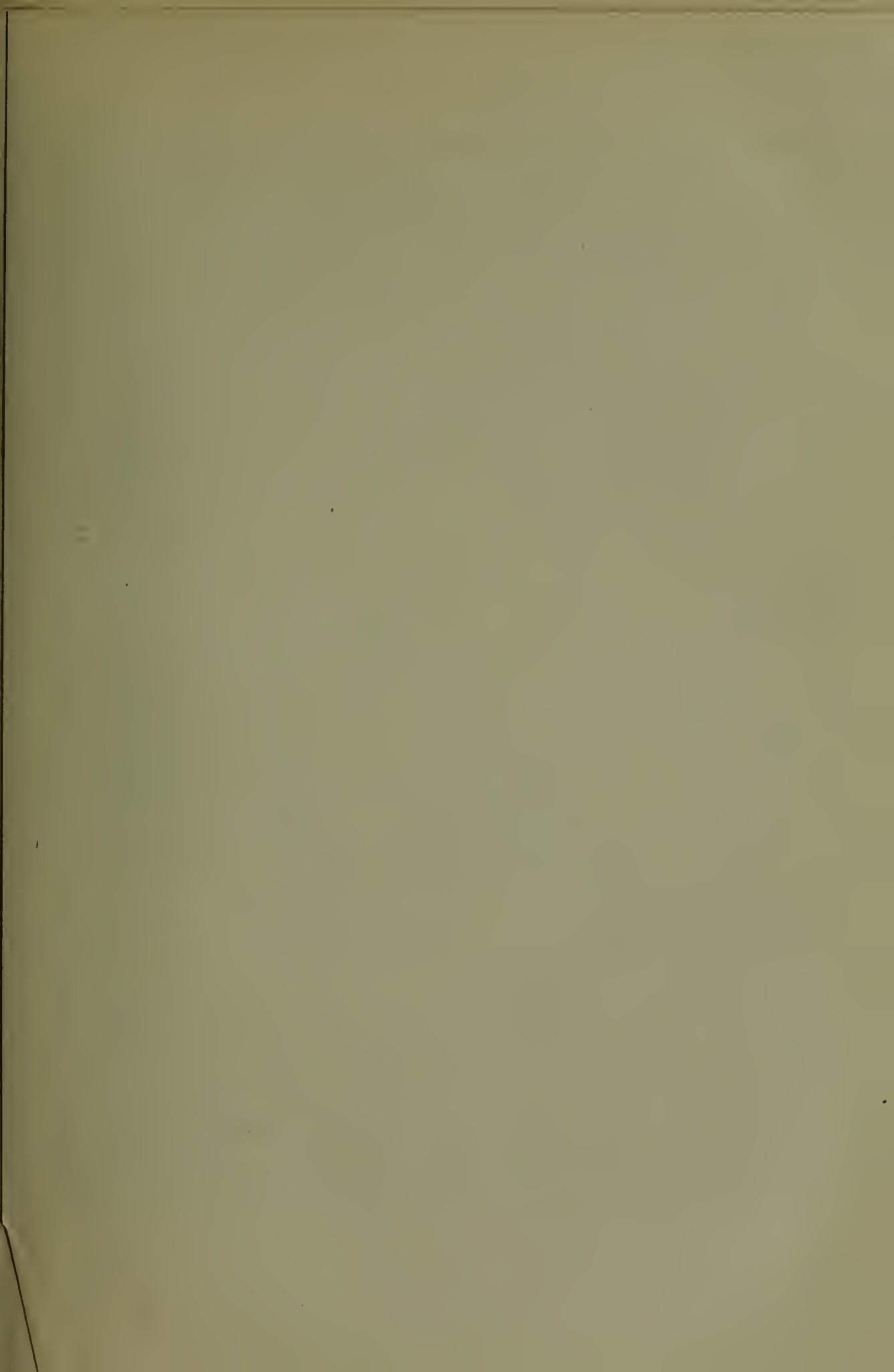
other lands that have refused to admit them, from the remnants of all the "White" armies that have gone down before the Bolsheviks. Perhaps this last is why so many of them still wear, among other incongruous mixtures of garments, the fag-ends of what were once uniforms, though there are hints that their tastes run that way. Scores of Russian refugees flock daily to a soup-kitchen in a distant part of the foreign settlement, where a slab of war-bread and a bowl of soup each, sometimes with a sliver of meat in it, are doled out against tickets graded according to the number in the family. Some live in an old Russian church in the vicinity, or at least in the shack barracks that have grown up about it. A few keep pathetic little shops within this inclosure. Rumor has it that it is not those Russians who were doing well in Shanghai before the "Red" terror broke, or who escaped there early with their fortunes more or less intact, who do most for their destitute fellow-countrymen. It is not unusual to meet ragged Russians carrying home a little piece of pork or other raw meat swinging unwrapped at the end of a vegetable-fiber string, after the Chinese custom. Now and then there pass a pair who seem to have regained their grip on the skirts of prosperity. But the majority of these white Orientals cannot compete with the Chinese, for they are neither as industrious, as ingenious, nor as long-enduring; in fact many of them are visibly stupid and indolent compared with their squint-eyed competitors when it comes to snatching a livelihood under crowded conditions.

Thus few have jobs and fewer still can hold those they get. Not many of them care to work anyway, if we are to believe people who have tried to help this modern lost tribe. Some have grown so debased that they demand charity as a right, and will not lift a hand in labor—to "work with the hands" seems to be a Russian synonym for all that is disgraceful. The Russian women sheltered in a former home of fallen sisterhood have British housekeepers, and Chinese servants to do their housework. The men condescend to furnish music in the theaters and cabarets; the girls who have not already lost their charms serve as decoys in Shanghai's palaces of forced gaiety and liquid exhilaration, getting their "rake-off," by means of tickets, on each round they induce male patrons to buy. It goes without saying that many of them offer themselves as partners in more than the dancing. There are a few sullen, some vicious, faces in Shanghai's big Russian colony, but most of them look merely broken-spirited. In the main they are not an aggressive group, or the problem of the great international port would be more than that of keeping them above the border line of

starvation and of salvaging as much of the prestige of the white race as may be saved where the Chinese come in daily contact with such sorry examples of the West. Now that China has officially recognized the Bolshevik régime and "Red" diplomatic and consular officers have settled down in the old czarist government buildings in Peking and the treaty-ports, life is in many cases harder than ever for these refugee Russians, few of whom can, even if they wish, prove themselves good Bolsheviks.

Time was when the international settlement of Shanghai stood, in the minds at least of the pious and the cynical, for all that is iniquitous. It is no model town to this day. A missionary assures us that if God lets Shanghai endure He owes an apology to Sodom and Gomorrah. But reform is in the saddle. Some years ago a group called the "Moral Welfare League," mainly American and largely missionary in motive power, took up the question of sidestepping the pillar of salt fate. Thus far they have concentrated their fire mainly on the elimination of brothels, the very name of which would have been deeply resented in the old days before the first judge appointed to the United States Court of China attacked this one of Shanghai's established and entrenched institutions, by calling into court all "American girls" engaged in the profession and forcing them either to leave town or admit that they were "Americans" for business purposes only. The uproar resulted in the judge's resignation, but a decade later the league took up the task and after four years of effort prevailed upon the more or less international city fathers, with their British majority, to force the establishments that had been a considerable source of revenue to the settlement to draw lots, one fifth of them to disappear yearly. Therefore with this year there remain no legal houses of ill-fame—in the international settlement. The former inmates have either had to scatter under cover, after the way of all man's vices under prohibition, plying their trade from more or less respectable rooming and apartment houses, or move over into the French concession next door or into the Chinese city, clear across the street beyond. There the point of view is very different—and surprisingly alike in the two races—from the cold whited-sepulcher, Anglo-Saxon one, so that for practical purposes the efforts of the league have not yielded much.

Human perfection is rare under the best of circumstances, still more so under three jurisdictions, one of them a hodgepodge of conflicting interests and points of view. The way of the reformer is particularly



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hard in Shanghai because he has not one or two legislative bodies to convince but an endless array of authorities, and the notions of the different nations as to what constitutes vice forces him to content himself with the lowest common denominator. Even in the international settlement, where a law once passed can be applied to the Chinese and others without extraterritorial rights, those with them are subject only to the laws of their own country, interpreted by their own consul. For instance: every one knew that a big and unscrupulous gambling-house was operating in the settlement. The operators were Brazilians, which meant that the "international" police must have a search warrant from the Brazilian consul before the defendants could be brought into court. Naturally the consul refused it. So the lessee, a Chinese born in Hong Kong and therefore a British subject, was brought into British court. There the judge said that though the evidence was quite sufficient for conviction he could do nothing as long as the Brazilian consul refused to act—in other words a consul representing half a dozen residents of Shanghai could effectively block all the rest. In this particular case further investigation showed that the land on which the gambling-house stood belonged to the American Church Mission, being leased to the Hong Kong Chinese, so that steps were taken that forced the Brazilians to rent elsewhere.

But the league sees signs of progress. Even the cabarets in the French concession, none of them the pride of the various lands, including our own, from which their proprietors or managers come, have scented the new air and washed their tawdry faces with the promise that the Russian girls shall not be forced to drink more than they wish in the interests of the house and that, their nightly entertaining over, they shall be sent home in taxicabs! Were they vouchsafed the gift of prophecy, the cabaret-keepers might make out in the offing the mirage of themselves going the way of the acknowledged houses of ill-fame in the settlement.

There seem to be regular gradations in the justice meted out in the consular courts of the fourteen nationalities which are not subject to Chinese law. It is an open secret that the Portuguese foot the list, and that it is a rare day when one of several other consuls finds one of his fellow-exiles guilty. Italian subjects seem to deal in munitions on a large scale with impunity, and an old byword has it that "there is always a scandal" in the Italian government service in China. The Japanese are reputed much better, though the fact that a culprit appearing before the Japanese consul in his judicial capacity is also a subject

of the mikado does not jeopardize his fortunes. Even though in a flagrant case of running arms our late judge was not too severe, one gets the impression that perhaps the Americans are as fair as any toward both sides when trying their own people. Possibly this is not so much due to our great moral superiority over the world at large as to the fact that we have opportunities enough to earn our international livelihood without descending to some of the questionable practices which have grown up among more crowded peoples. The United States Court for China in which our own citizens are tried for any offense too big for our consuls to handle, established in 1906 and ruled over by a presidentially appointed judge, is much less picturesque than the Mixed Court. Its cases may at times be highly important; indeed, the judge may almost be said to have absolute power over the lives and property of Americans in China, since he is not even hampered by a jury. But though it is a real circuit court that now and then moves as far north as Tientsin and as far inland as Hankow, it is after all only an American court, applying American laws. With the temptation to attach it to the spoils system things might be much worse, for no more serious complaint seems to have been made against the latest absolute dictator over the lives and property of Americans in China than that he is not personally the staunchest defender of the Eighteenth Amendment. This, deponent further alleges, does not make him unique among those in our government service.

Though it is called international, the nearest suggestion to an American concession we have in China is largely British in its government atmosphere. Of the 12,000 Americans reputed to be living in China hardly 3500 dwell in Shanghai, whereas there are some 6500 British—though by no means all of these are Caucasian. So no doubt there is justice in the prevailing arrangement. At any rate—to cite a single example—there is one American policeman on the “international” force, who once a year sneaks in at the back door of our consulate to register, at the same time imploring that his nationality be kept dark; and the environment of the settlement police station is so decidedly cockney that even the Sikhs, the Chinese, the scattering of Japanese and other races on the force take on some of the manners and at times even a hint of the Whitechapel accent of their self-confident superiors. On the other hand bitter complaints have been heard of late, especially among British “old-timers,” that “Americanism” is eating into the vitals of old Shanghai. If it were merely a question of jazz and chewing-gum and billboards and their myriad kin, one could pause to drop a tear with them,



but what they wrathfully call the "Americanization" of Shanghai seems to go deeper than that. Incredible as it may seem, there is now an American president of the municipal council. American business methods are forcing the pace of competition far beyond what the men of a few decades ago would consider honest, to say nothing of respectable; office buildings are being equipped with central heating and real elevators—not mere "lifts"; a "drive" headed, of all things, by an old British resident threatens to build another Y.M.C.A. building, where there will be night classes in salesmanship and efficiency, in advertising and accountancy. There is even said to be less drinking in the "longest bar in the world" than in the good old days before it was pestered with moral welfare leagues and other strange diseases. In those times if a man absorbed too many whisky-and-sodas and failed to appear at his office after the noonday siesta it did not matter, for his comprador ran the business anyway. Now there is not even the siesta, and old established Britishers are horrified with the thought that some day there may not even be the whisky and soda—unless they go away over into the French concession to get it.

Those of us who, as citizens or subjects of one of the fourteen nations which still have extraterritorial rights in China, are subject only to our own laws interpreted by our own consular courts, whether in the international settlement or elsewhere in the formerly Celestial Empire, can appreciate what the loss of that status means to Russians, Germans, Austrians—in general, the losers in the World War, who are to all intents and purposes Chinese in so far as their judicial standing is concerned—by dropping into any Chinese court or prison. One who has wandered far and wide through their eighteen provinces sees as yet insufficient evidence on the side of those Chinese who are urging the immediate abolition of what some Shanghai editors have tried in vain to condense to "extrality." Glimpses of a dozen of their penal institutions far enough inland not to have been renovated into "model" establishments ready for inspection by the foreign investigation committee promised by the Washington Conference, and a few sad examples of the misworking or the utter non-functioning of their courts, are argument enough on this score. The abuse of those still essential rights conferred upon us by treaty, like the misuse of the concessions, is of course a horse of quite a different color.

Nor is a morning in the Mixed Court of Shanghai—at least from the spectators' bench—time badly spent. In fact one of the good jobs

still open to a young man more eager for experience than for the less palpable rewards of life is to become a vice-consul and get himself assigned as an "assessor" to that court. There are two British and two American assessors, and any of the other twelve favored nations, including Japan, can send an assessor, though the others normally do so only when the plaintiff is one of their own nationality, so that most of the work falls on the Anglo-Saxons. Established in 1869 by agreement between China and the West, but virtually turned over to the foreigners something more than a decade ago, this court has jurisdiction not merely over the Chinese but over all "unrecognized" foreigners within the international settlement; and recent agitation for its rendition to China does not decrease one's interest in the proceedings. A Chinese magistrate appointed by the consular body occupies the other end of the Mixed Court bench, and in theory has equal authority with the assessor of the day. But in practice those cases in which the two judges cannot agree prove that a Chinese opinion is a minority verdict. This is perhaps as it should be, for rumor has it that the important case is rare in which the foreign assessor cannot catch some subtle hint that his Celestial colleague has been influenced in the time-honored Chinese way. Perhaps the assessor himself is not always immune to national feelings. Most cases, however, are anything but important, and the influencing ability of the alleged culprits is usually at a low ebb.

An American girl without a passport to prove her quite evident nationality was the first to reach the dock that morning. Amid the Russian outcasts, Chinese pickpockets, sneak-thieves, and ragged garbage-faced opium addicts who shared the prisoners' bench with her she looked like a violet among weeds. But the testimony that dripped from her rose-red lips hardly needed that added by the plaintiff and her corroborating witnesses to remind us that clothes no more make the lady than they do the gentleman, and to reverse our first estimate of the transgressors' row by transferring our sympathy to the sorry specimens of nature's highest and lowest masterpiece as still mere weeds but exposed to poison ivy. Even those dregs of the law-schools who live on the sewage of courts in Shanghai as elsewhere were touched to smiles from the fathomless depths of their cynicism. But that morning the chief justice chanced to be an American, so that the lack of a passport was no such serious matter as it sometimes is in China, and as he knew for all his youth enough of the ways of the world to recognize a case of what Shakspeare might have called "dog eat dog," the scratching, biting, and blaspheming which the defendant had wreaked upon another

of her kind took only a small Shanghai bank-note from her jeweled hand-bag before she flounced forth into the world again.

A Russian of pugnacious, vodka-loving mien, wearing gutter-stained garments in season at the opposite solstice, came next, quickly to win his third conviction and be sentenced into the hands of the Chinese authorities for deportation. Probably he would be put on the next Russian steamer for Vladivostok, some one whispered to us, while the interpreter turned the prisoner's prematurely experienced face pale through its grime by a monotonous repetition of the assessor's soft-toned words. "*Niet!* No! Send me to prison for life instead!" gasped the fellow as he started to his feet. The less insensible of the court attendants controlled the corners of their mouths with difficulty as he was led away. Evidently the fellow did not know, for all his assumption of complete sophistication, that once over the concession boundaries he might not find the Chinese authorities inexorable in obeying the commands of the Mixed Court.

The usual petty grist of an ordinary court of justice passed swiftly between the millstones,—a thief, a peddler of opium, an unlicensed rickshaw-coolie, an automobile speeder, most of them offering ingenious alibis that imposed on no one but themselves, for they were all Chinese. The speeder may have been urged on from the back seat, but that is one of the perils of his profession. Foreigners rarely drive their own cars in China. Your Chinese chauffeur may be as hard on a motor vehicle as his race is on its own domestic animals; he probably hands in more bills for oil and gasoline and repairs than any machine could endure, to say nothing of consume; he is certain to make a constant din whether the street down which he is racing is packed with humanity or as devoid of life as the mountains of the moon, for your normal Chinese not only loves a noise, particularly a loud, discordant, Ford-like noise, but he wins much "face" by scattering his startled fellow-countrymen and simultaneously calling attention to his position of great importance. But at least his wages—if only that were all!—are low, and it is much more convenient to have your chauffeur appear before the Mixed Court than to be hauled before your own consul.

Those young vice-consuls who become assessors in Shanghai have no just cause to complain at the drabness of existence. To-day they have to "divorce" a Chinese and his fourth concubine, and perhaps find a verbal trail out of the difficulty by ruling that "the domestic relations of the respondents are forever severed." To-morrow it may be a petition to restrain a boy from worshiping at the shrine of his adopted

ancestors; the day after may bring a case of collision due to the incorrigible habit of Chinese junks of passing as closely as possible in front of foreign steamers in order to shake off or bequeath to others the evil spirits that are always treading on Chinese heels. Anything from first-degree murder to the throwing of dirty water into the street may come up in the Mixed Court, and many a young vice-consul has grown pale and thin with worrying whether or not to order a man shot. For there is an average of a capital crime a month and no court of appeal; "we have the first and the last guess," as one of our assessors put it. Ninety-three thousand criminal cases passed under the noses of Mixed Court assessors in a single recent year, said to be more than appear before any other tribunal in the world; and some of the fourteen thousand civil cases thrown in demand the training and poise of an international jurist, though most assessors are not even lawyers. There was the case, for instance, of the American-Irish-Jewish-German-Russian-Chinese partnership that came up for dissolution. True, the American and the Irishman—who for once admitted himself British—were not subject to the jurisdiction of the Mixed Court; but that only complicated matters. The Jew could not definitely prove any nationality; hence what law was to be applied to him? The German and the Russian, having recently lost the rights of "extrality," must be treated in accordance with German and Russian laws respectively. But what Russian law; the Imperial or the unrecognized "Red"? For the man hastened to deny that he was a Bolshevik, and he certainly could not be the subject of the dead czar!

Nor does too much division of responsibility, any more than of nationality, make for efficiency. Where it is no one person's business to say when a clock shall be mended, yet where any one of a score may legally order it done, it is natural that there should be cases like that of the coolie who came into the court-room with a ladder while the Mixed Court was in full session, took a clock off the wall under the very eyes of the judges—and has never been heard of since!

Some of our Shanghai assessors are as "snappy" as the self-confident young army-officers who used to pass judgment on the population of Coblenz during our brief European military rule; more of them are conscientious and not only insist on knowing something of what the witnesses are saying but sometimes learn to speak and even to read Chinese. The difficulty is that if they become too efficient, competent in Chinese and international law, and of trained judgment, there are openings far better than the consular service tempting them. In general

the impression one carries away from a morning in the Mixed Court is that the blank-faced Oriental on the bench knows but does not care and that the ardent young American or Britisher beside him cares but does not know.

If one insists on exploring Shanghai completely, there is Foochow Road under French protection blazing and noisy by night with shrieking theaters and other forms of Chinese gaiety; out at Siccawei, beyond the old pagoda that has long protected Shanghai from evil spirits, stands the big cathedral, to the observatory and priests of which the shipping along the Chinese coast owes many a warning in the season of typhoons—and where the noise of the vested boy choir, for all the diligent training of its Celestial members, is not unlike the crashing and clashing of broken iron in a sack. By this time one is running across foreigners who live on the very edge of the concessions, with the smell and noises of Chinese territory, of rice-fields enriched by the precious city sewage, with grave-lands, uproarious night-watchmen, raucous coolies screaming their doubtful wares. Here one is reminded, if foreigners in uniform during any of the frequent civil wars beyond, their rifles beside them at desk or counter, and barbed wire entanglements thrown across every street where it emerges from Chinese territory, have not already done so, that the foreign settlements which many at home call Shanghai are but a little island in a vast sea of Chinese. Out on its far edges beggars and their kin throw together shacks of anything and everything which are periodically encroaching upon and being driven off foreign territory. Out there where Chinese jurisdiction begins again is a creek on which float many boat-homes so like the makeshift human kennels along its banks that there is no distinct line between shore- and water-dwellings. But the hurried round-the-world tourist need not wander so far afield from his luxurious floating hostelry to catch a hint, if his powers of perception are not utterly atrophied, of what life means to a race far removed from the comforts he has come to think of as essential to happiness, even to existence. The break between the West and the East is most sudden of all, perhaps, where men in semi-foreign dress, and their still often foot-bound wives and sisters, step directly from modern street-cars to wheelbarrows, dropping at once into the China of centuries ago, little influenced by foreign ways, as far as they exist in Shanghai. The macadam roads and the foreign houses reach a little farther here and there, but the realm of the automobile and the bath-tub soon ends, and that vast land where so little has made its way that is

newer than ten or twenty centuries ago stretches away into the vast interior. But we are getting beyond even international Shanghai, so that we may as well definitely bid farewell to modern comforts and plunge on into the real China.



A priest of Pootoo



Workmen were touching up the old and constructing new gods during the slack pilgrim season at Pootoo



The boatmen of Shaohsing row with their feet and paddle with their hands in perfect indifference to synchronization



In the foreground is Shaohsing's receptacle for cast-off babies, of which it then contained a putrid score or more



## CHAPTER II

### THE FIRST CIRCLE INLAND

I HAVE rarely in all my travels been so well protected as on the journey across Hangchow Bay south of Shanghai. For not merely did I prevail upon one of our consuls, assessor in the Mixed Court to boot, so that in a way I carried my own law and tribunal with me, but we were further augmented by an artistic representative of that great oily corporation which at times makes our mere government officials seem its vassals. Few foreign residents, to say nothing of mere travelers, ever see this China across the bay; it is near at hand and yet as nearly unspoiled by foreign influence as many a region much more inaccessible.

A comfortable steamer leaves Shanghai Bund late every afternoon and is docked in Ningpo before leisurely foreign passengers, unlike the mob of Chinese who seethe out of its hold with the drop of the gang-plank, have finished their morning toilet. Though the Portuguese had already landed here in the sixteenth century and it was one of the first cities of China opened to foreign trade, the passing of a foreigner in the streets of this pioneer treaty-port is still an interference with local industry. For all its long running start of Shanghai that has so completely outstripped it, Ningpo is distinctly Chinese, without enough foreign business and customs men and missionaries to color it. Yet it is the commercial capital of Chekiang Province, outdoing in business the more gentlemanly political capital, Hangchow. To say nothing of the far-famed and often execrated Ningpo varnish, one whiff is enough to show that fishing is the life of the place, from which dried and salt fish are distributed throughout east-central China. The area covered by the fishermen of this Chinese Gloucester comprises 30,000 square miles, and some earthly minded soul has estimated that the sea yields Ningpo an annual income of about \$3,500,000, which even in "Mex" is nothing to sneeze at in China.

It is not without its bearing on its fishy character that Ningpo is China's southernmost ice-field. Down the river by which the shipping of all descriptions that crowds its inadequate wharves must come and go

there stand out sharply against the sky-line scores of what look at first sight like unusually large Chinese dwellings. When one investigates, however, he finds that they are ice-houses, thick mud-brick walls rising high above clammy cave-like holes in the earth and covered with unusually steep thatch-and-pole roofs. About these ice is "grown" on hundreds of shallow artificial ponds during the very short winter season. The river itself never freezes, but on the coldest nights ice of about the thickness of window-glass forms on these superficial sheets of water, rice-fields in summer, and must be gathered early in the morning and hurried away into the caves, the wigwam-like superstructures of which dot the horizon for miles along the river-bank below the old treaty-port. Sometimes this ice lasts until November comes around again. It is needed during the hot months to preserve the fish between salt sea and salted state, for of course the people of Ningpo have no such epicurean weaknesses as to require ice for the preservation of their own food or the cooling of their summer drinks.

But we had not come all the way across the bay from Shanghai just to see Ningpo, which after all is not greatly different from a thousand other Chinese cities. We were heading into the Chusan Archipelago. Pootoo, one of many islands of this group which clusters off the coast of China in the vicinity of Shanghai, is one of the half-dozen most sacred places in China, and as such it could not justly be left out of my long Chinese pilgrimage. Foreign comforts were mainly left behind us at Ningpo. The weak-lunged little native steamer had nothing better to offer than compartments opening on the upper passageway and almost completely taken up with two wooden platforms each, of the height of beds, but not long or wide enough for the average full-grown foreigner to straighten out on them. There were no other furnishings, no suggestion of heat, not even the quilt that most Chinese travelers carry with them; but the cold wooden boxes were called "state-rooms," and a fare-schedule on the lower deck, in Chinese only, ended with the information: "For foreigners, double price." We doubled up on our wooden shelves and left to the purser and the captain the task of explaining this brazen confirmation of a custom surreptitiously wide-spread in China. No doubt we were not expected to be able to read the sign; probably most foreigners demanded a whole "state-room" to themselves, thereby justifying its concluding information. But why submit to extortion while carrying along one's own law and government? Toward the middle of the cold afternoon the officers capitulated, but, to save their faces, sent an underling to accept the "first-class Chinese" fare.

By this time we had long since passed Chinhai at the mouth of the Ningpo River, its sea-wall, built when Hangchow was capital of the Sung dynasty, now newly repaired after a disastrous typhoon, the large island of Tinghai, in whose honor—or was it out of sarcasm?—our pathetic little craft was named, and were plunging into the archipelago. In the olden days the shore and islands here were well fortified from the Chinese point of view, and relics of those simple times remained here and there in the form of helpless little forts and useless cannon. All day we sailed among rocky islands rising everywhere from the sea, treeless, but some with large towns on them, and passing, overtaking, and crossing all manner of junks. These vary in every part of China, those in this region having their high poops painted with gods and devils and diabolical and heavenly scenes in brilliant colors among which reds predominated. At the bow two eyes were painted, of course, for how could a boat see its way if it were blind, or keep away from the evil spirits constantly pursuing it if the devil-scaring poop were not kept in their faces?

We came at length to Pootoo, but not in our "state-rooms." Whether it was due to our own exciting conduct or to some other form of intoxication, or possibly to the fact that the steamer did not have an eye on either side of her bow, the *Tinghai* had great difficulty in keeping clear headway. After running several times head on into great masses of junks and small boats of the water-dwelling Chinese that crowd like rush-hour subway passengers about the ports of central and southern China, we ran aground to save an anchored junk, and when all efforts to refloat us proved vain the captain reluctantly called sampans and sent his charges on to their destination, paying the fares even of his three truculent foreign passengers. That last leg of the journey was across a wind-swept patch of open sea in which the capsizing of some of the line of clumsy little sail-boats that cut across it as exactly as a row of telegraph poles across a desert would have been anything but surprising.

Pootoo might fittingly be called the Island Without Women, for in theory at least it is given over entirely to monasteries and temples in which only men may dwell, or indeed come on pilgrimage. It is not merely the human feminine element that is unwelcome. There are tomcats, but no mates with whom they can sing their midnight lullabies, roosters, but none of the bacon-decorating portion of their species, dogs of the respectable persuasion only, and so on as far through the

animal kingdom as my investigation carried, possibly even into the vegetable realm. But with self-ruled foreigners within her borders China is forced to be content with approximation in many grave matters. In summer there is hardly a Sunday that an excursion does not bring down upon the monks in their far-flung ocean-washed retreat whole steamer-loads of foreign women to cavort in the latest scanty surf-dodging raiment about the excellent beaches of the island. They sleep on the ships that bring them, to be sure, thereby sparing the monks the worst form of gossip among the doubting fair ones of their own race, but the beaches cannot be saved from violation, and the misused recluses can only shrug their shoulders and tell their beads in protest.

The absence of women does not, moreover, result in the complete Utopia one might hope. As we made our way inland on the dot of land that had turned out to be an extensive stretch of earth, piled up in hills that were stiff climbs, rocky and with few trees, though here and there a fertile valley, news ran ahead of us that three foreigners had come at this unseasonable November-time. The man-of-all-work whom the naturally more affluent of my companions had brought with him took up with group after group of monks, hands tucked away in the long sleeves of their quilted bluish-gray kimono-gowns, the question of our accommodation. But though they have avowedly left earthly desires behind and were waiting only for absorption into that Nirvana where covetousness ceases to exist, the least any of them considered a fitting offset for our presence for the night in the guest-rooms of a monastery was five silver dollars. Summer tourist parties no doubt, or the vicinity of Shanghai, has brought them learning not in their sacred classics, if indeed any Chinese can be taught in matters involving money. For while five of the lowly silver dollars of China may not seem to the American who has never crossed his own seaboard an exorbitant fee for the privilege of setting up three folding cots in bare wooden-floored rooms housing undusted altars and gaudy gods before which the monks were sure to justify their existence by chanting and shrieking, beating bells and gongs and sundry noise-producers at odd hours of the night, it was something like a hundredfold the fair Chinese price. Our very sanity would have been doubted if we had succumbed to such rascality. The monks were so well banded together in their un-Buddha-like roguery, that it took an hour of wandering up and down to get us admitted to a hill-top monastery where word of the agreed-upon assault on our purses

and our common sense had evidently not penetrated; even there the cost of lodging evidenced lack of free and open competition.

We had chosen a poor time for our Pootoo pilgrimage. All next day it rained, and the gray temples among the grayer rocks, the score or more of the islands, most of them shaped like pointed mountain-tops, strewn as far as we could see in any direction from the drizzling summit of the sacred island over the sea that was not even blue in such weather, all lost much of the attractiveness which they must have under the unclouded sun that so often floods this Chusan Archipelago. Even in the rain there was pleasure in wandering among the old temples and their aged trees, climbing the nomading paths up ravines and along gentle slopes, drifting into monasteries as peacefully unlike the cosmopolitan hubbub of Shanghai as those monks under a vow of silence were from the average Chinese. Nature is left in as undisputed sway as possible at Pootoo, and every edifice upon it is at least quasi-religious. Sacred words are carved on the boulders; pious pilgrims to the island in other seasons place little split-bamboo wands under one such huge rock, precariously balanced by nature and bearing the characters for "Western Heaven," in the naïve belief that each is helping to support it! The carved rocks are innumerable, some forming great stone steps leading from one temple to another, the most striking one proclaiming in the olden rounded characters that "Buddha is eternal."

Pootoo is as exclusively Buddhist as is possible to a race which distinguishes with difficulty among its intermingled religions. It is under the special protection of Kwanyin, known to foreign residents—if at all—as the goddess of mercy. Recently there has been a considerable renaissance in Chinese Buddhism, and much renovating was going on among the Pootoo temples. The slack season in pilgrims is naturally the monks' time to prepare for another year's influx. On this rainy Sunday men were hewing out more huge wooden gods, filling the cracks and other ungodly imperfections with putty or some Chinese equivalent, pasting the sacred beings over with a kind of tissue-paper made of rice-straw to hold the colors, gilding and painting them, touching up the old gods with the gaudiest of colors, and bowing down to worship them. Or perhaps they leave the genuflections to the monks and pilgrims, for they were smoking, chattering, eating rice as they worked. Some were boring holes about the holy mouths for the insertion of mustaches and beards. It is strange how a people with little or no facial hair imbue their gods with resplendent whiskers, which we re-

move. In many a temple entrance were the familiar four huge door gods, complacently seated on granite, as indifferent to the upholstered comforts of life as the people to which they owe their creation. New-comers in China would have been astonished to see how nonchalantly the "artists," many of them little more than boys, worked from memory, gauging the size, expression, gestures, and attitudes, the painting and the decorating, with a pattern in their own heads, yet reproducing the same old gods as exactly as if from finished models. The peace and quiet of these ancient temple compounds were a contrast with the hurrying, noisy world of to-day that brought relief even to us, little as we could understand the temperament of the solemn-faced men who let the years roll over them in their little ocean-girdled retreat as calmly as the rocks along its edges endure the tossing waves. Peace at least they have. The yellow-tiled roofs softened with age stand out among groups of trees that seem to be dreaming of their youth in the days of Confucius; a bridge vaults its way in Chinese fashion over a green patch of water that no doubt will be a flaming stretch of lotus-blossoms in season; artistic arrangements of nature are at every turn of the wandering paths; squirrels—all male no doubt—play leisurely among the rocks and trees.

In most Chinese monasteries the monks have a kind of waiting-room where "distinguished" visitors, which includes all foreigners who deign to visit them, are served with tea and received by the head priest, or whichever of his colleagues corresponds to their relative importance. But on Pootoo there was none of this. Either it was the off season for the monks, visitors being too few to keep up formalities, or foreigners are too familiar here near the path of ocean-going steamers to be honored. Perhaps they were too busy with their preparations for the new season, though there was leisurely calm in the work of renovating—or, distressing thought, perhaps men who would only be "done" ten rather than a hundredfold for their lodging were not worthy of respect. At any rate we were not forced to drink a single cup of tea—or feign doing so in order to protect ourselves from the dirty-edged cups—during all our wet day of tramping and climbing about Pootoo.

The residents of Pootoo are vegetarians, of course, as becomes true Buddhists, which means not merely eschewing meat and eggs but even fish, here in the very heart of a great fishing-ground. But the monks seem to leave the island whenever the spirit moves them; who knows but that they get their share of pork? Or if not, there are vegetable-

gardens tucked away in the hollows of the hills among the monasteries from which experienced Buddhist cooks can make very passable imitations of the forbidden viands, and certainly the sleek and contented-looking were not in the minority. Unlike other holy places in the East there were no beggars, though perhaps they send their quota in the pilgrim season. Only a few of the groups of fishermen who work among the scores of fantastic islands visible from Pootoo hung about the temples. They wore costumes much like those of old Holland, some of the same rich reddish-brown color as the sails dotting by the hundred the yellow sea; blue on other days, they say, when no westerly winds stir up the silt carried out here by the Yang Tze Kiang and the sky has something other than a leaden hue to reflect.

The *Tinghai* itself came to our rescue in the late afternoon, and a score of priests and monks in cape-like caps came down to seek a relief from the peace and quiet of the Island Without Women. We had wondered whether the captain would not pass the island to punish us for not paying double fares; but he seemed to have reread the foot-note, and though he gave us no welcoming smile he accepted the nineteen "small" dimes we each tendered him quite as if our faces had been yellow and our eyes squinted. Perhaps he had his revenge, for he only went a short way to Shen-chia-men before tying up for the night, most of which we spent trying to coax a soporific softness out of our cramping board beds. By noon next day the Ningpo ice-houses were again dotting the horizon, and there was ample time to see my wheel-bound companions safely aboard the afternoon steamer for Shanghai.

On the isolated piece of railroad out of Ningpo which still perhaps has hopes of some day joining its parent line from Hangchow to Shanghai, there is a town named Tzeki famous for its *k'angs*, or large earthenware jars, great stacks of which lie near the station. From the place where the old treaty-port thins out to eastern China's idea of open country, the train rambles through a vast graveyard, a fat, flat plain dotted thickly everywhere with the depressing mounds of earth, plumper than in northern China, grass-covered, each with an upright stone bearing a Chinese character or two. Some of the oldest foreign graves in China are at Ningpo, reminders of the early days of Yankee clipper-ships, but with no worshiping descendants to care for them they have been all but forgotten. Scrub trees grow about some of the clustered mounds, which cover whole hillsides and much of the fields.

There are hundreds of corpses above ground in this region, too, in aging coffins, some covered with weather-faded grass mats, others with slabs of stone, awaiting the propitious day when the descendants can bury them. But the thrifty peasant, driven by the constantly increasing mouths about his rice-pot, gets much planting in between. Flagstone roads narrow as paths wind away through the fields of wet, rich loam, but high hills are not far off on either hand, and little old walled towns are frequent. Canals that are mere ditches are everywhere, with boats poled up and down by men in a kind of cotton-armored shirt.

Where the remnant of railroad gives up, the south-of-the-bay traveler to Hangchow walks half a mile, followed by porters who waste no money on red caps, to where whole trains of long, narrow canal-boats take up the task. Though we were just across the bay from Shanghai, life was in no way the same. Corn—that is, what our English cousins call maize or “’og feed”—was not only plentiful along the canal on which we crawled away about noon, but it was eaten in the ear by human beings. I had not felt so much at home in weeks. There were shocks of it, or at least of the stalks, in the form of walls and roofs for the many convenient holes in the ground by which the Chinese farmer invites the passer-by to contribute to the fertility of his overworked fields. Once or twice we passed through crude locks, but these and the canals were so narrow, and our long string of boats so low, that it was a delightful ride, like skimming just over the top of the earth, seeing the life of the region in all its details, yet without too close contact.

Not the same could be said for the pompous fellow of the merchant type who started to board one of our boats where it seemed easy to step from lock-coping to the passing deck. His coolie carrier with most of his belongings made the step and got ashore without mishap, but Chinese of the non-laboring class are notably awkward in physical feats, since exercise for the mere benefit of their bodies would seem idiotic to them, and as our haughty friend stepped calmly after his coolie with the air that becomes a man above mere work, he missed where there was no reason to do so, and when next seen was spitting out the vegetable refuse and worse with which the canal waters of China are impregnated. Convenient hands fished him out, and he attacked the problem of getting himself ready to land a few hours later. As he had on his winter clothing, each garment a cotton-stuffed quilt, this was a serious matter. Luckily the sun was





A street of Shaohsing



The altar of the temple-tomb of Frederick Ward, American organizer of the "Ever Victorious Army" of Taiping days



The principal street of Hangchow, as famous for its silk-shops to day as when Marco Polo strolled along its great flagstones



Soochow has been called the Venice of China, but even Venice never smelled as badly as this

out, for he had to strip completely except for a kind of swimming-pants, and stood dismally on the roof of his boat while every one about him turned to and helped wring out his soggy garments.

The canals split up here and there, but we kept to the narrow ones at the pace of a man trotting cross-country, beholding all the life about us as from a magic carpet. Boat-loads of coolies competed with our launch, showing that boyish cheerfulness which makes the Chinese of the masses so much more agreeable than his prototype in many a more affluent land. Boats bound up canal were towed by one man each, who toiled his way along the stone path, over little humped bridges across the side canals, past frequent deposits of enriching filth, endlessly on across the flat country. Now and again we broke out into broad ponds that in some cases became veritable lakes, so that only water transportation was possible. Most of these were cut up by long weir-like reed fish-traps. In other places the land came down to the very canal-sides again, and for distances it was lined by compact towns, with babies in curious thickly woven straw—"stand-ups" one might call them, like the cask in which an Italian peasant carries his grapes from the vineyard, turned large end down, the child protruding from the small end. Though it was already December a few countrymen were still threshing rice, beating out the heads of handfuls of it into big wooden boxes, and in places rice-cocks covered all the landscape not already covered with graves.

The kind of scissor-net widely used by fishermen in central and southern China was much in evidence. While an old man, a woman, a boy, or some other being incapable of regular full labor paddles slowly along, a sturdier man stands in the bow of a small boat and manipulates the net, thrusting it like an open purse fitted with a ten-foot pair of chop-sticks to the bottom, closing it by bringing the two slender bamboo handles together, and drawing it to the surface. I have watched Chinese fishermen go steadily through the same machine-like motions with this net once every minute for hours without any sign of impatience on their passive faces or a break in the clock-like regularity of their movements, though not a sign of a fish once rewarded them, and their very salvation from starvation depended on a catch. Thus is trained that endless patience of the Chinese—or are such occupations the result of the inherent possession of it? Here along the Chekiang canals, the reward was more certain, for they seemed to be fishing up grass from the bottom of the waterways, perhaps for fodder, or gathering fertilizer, for many of them were

dipping up a black oozy mass of filth and depositing it in the middle of their boats, filling a large compartment separated from the two ends by crude bulkheads before they rowed ashore to add this to their other forms of enriching filth. There is nothing that is not salvaged in China.

Of most interest, since they are unique and seem to be unknown anywhere else in the world, were the "foot-boats," as the few foreigners who have come to Shaohsing call them. The boatmen of this town, toward which we were headed, are famous, in so far as their fame has spread, for the way they row their long, slender, though by no means light, boats, tippy as canoes, with their legs. Sitting at the extreme stern, they place their bare feet on the ridged wooden inboard end of a large oar, fastened at the gunwale as usual, and row as perfectly and nonchalantly by drawing their knees up to the chest and straightening them again as experienced sailors do with their arms. What seems more remarkable is that they at the same time steer and to some extent augment their speed with a paddle without synchronization of movements, yet with perfect ease, their feet moving at one rhythm, their arms at another, and their faces at a third as they calmly take in the sights and gossip with their fellows on either side of the way. Either these foot-rowers are gifted with unusual endurance or this method is less tiring than the more usual one, for one of the few foreigners of Shaohsing will occasionally order his foot-boat toward dusk and sleep all night under its curved-mat roof while his boatman out in the open behind kicks him into Hangchow in time for the morning train to Shanghai. Some have been known to row steadily for twenty-four hours. The hulls of many of these and other narrow boats along this route were painted with panel-pictures of fanciful scenes and mythological beings in the gayest of Chinese colors clear around the sides from water-line to top, even those loaded to the brim, with sometimes a mud-dike around this to increase the carrying-capacity, with nostril-torturing night-soil. On the front of each was another fantastic painting, flanked by two protruding sticks painted as eyes. The few women who helped to propel boats used only the paddle; either their bound feet were not equal to the foot-oars or the posture necessary is considered immodest.

At length we bumped into the sides of hills through which the canal-builders had been forced to dig their way, sometimes in stone, the blue ranges close at hand sending the canal wandering in quest

of the least difficult passageways. At last, near dusk, we entered Shaohsing as it was fitting for canal-boat travelers to enter, through one of the several narrow water-gates piercing its stout old city walls. The launch had gone on to its garage or hangar or whatever it is a gasoline launch inhabits when off duty, outside the walls, but men poled our barge-boats one by one through a little round gate so narrow that each boat must be tipped sidewise to pass, and had one been two inches wider it would never have done so. Once within the walls we were greeted by a water-street, stretching away through the usual compact Chinese town and several times more crowded with boats of every size that could possibly use it than the most popular canals of Venice.

There are real streets in Shaohsing, however, even as in Venice, and in due season I managed to get ashore and follow narrow cobbled ways closely paralleling canals on either side and vaulting continually over others by arched stone bridges apparently so old that they carried the mind back to the Sung dynasty. A labyrinthine half-hour up and down these brought me to the foreign hospital. When I let it be known in Shanghai that I proposed to pass through Shaohsing, so near yet so far away across the bay, some one had asked me to call upon Dr. B. Who Dr. B. might be, even what his nationality, I had not the slightest notion. It sufficed that, in case of need, there was a foreigner in Shaohsing, and as it is not a treaty-port the chances were a hundred to one, even without the "Dr." prefix as evidence, that he was a missionary. I entered the hospital compound and sent in my card, whereupon down the stairs tumbled with outspread hand a man who had "slung hash" with me at the tables of a professional boarding-house in our mutually poverty-stricken freshmen days at college. It is enough of his character that he did not say in any form, "It's a small world."

B., whom I had not heard of since those hashy freshmen days a quarter of a century before, had been ten years in Shaohsing, one of the two or three foreign men on this side of the bay, and he was naturally dragged off on a needed holiday next morning. A kind of cabbage-lettuce was drying everywhere, as it had been along the canal the day before—spread out on the bridges so thickly as to leave barely a path for the streams of traffic across them, on grave-mounds and gravestones, on grandfather's unburied coffin out in the fields, even all about the temple-tomb of Yü Wang back against the hills, to which we came at the end of an entertaining hour's walk.

The more or less authentic history of China goes back to the "Great Yü," famous in the almost prehistoric annals of the Middle Kingdom, who about 2200 B.C. was so busy building canals and stopping floods that like some modern taxicab driver he passed his own door for eight years without once entering it. As he had been given the job after his father had been executed for not accomplishing it, possibly his industry was not all sense of duty. He wrought so diligently that when the king died Yü stepped into his shoes; but the habit seems by this time to have been upon him, for he died here as emperor while far from home on an inspecting trip, and, according to very plausible legend, was buried, with a hundred men killed to accompany him in the next world, where he fell, ten *li* out of Shao-hsing at the much run-down village of Yü Ling.

The usual swarm of urchins, some of them adults in age and body, followed us into the temple. The outer court, even much of the inner one, was filled with drying cabbage and rice; but then, Yü is reputed to have loved the common people and gave his life to agricultural improvements, so that he might not even have minded the unwiped children who flocked about us wherever we moved. Evidently the people of Yü Ling had taken unfair advantage of their proximity to the huge upright stone "needle" in the temple compound which assures male offspring to any one who "threads" it with a stone at a certain distance. I did not need to succeed at this feat, and B. had no better luck than so many times before. Inside, the temple was almost a wreck, with droppings of bats everywhere, even the paint on the spirit tablets, on the statue of the "Great Yü" himself worn off by them, the table for sacrificial offerings before the altar carpeted with them. Those in charge of the temple want \$10,000 for repairs, and they will no doubt get it when the place is on its very last legs, as is the Chinese way, but meanwhile the swarming loafers of Yü Ling might now and then sweep and dust it.

We took a foot-boat from the village and were kicked back to town in about the hour it would have taken us to walk, at a cost of about a dime. On the way we passed a girl squatting among brown grave-mounds watching a flock of geese and creamy goslings; though she must have been cold, and suffering from her recently bound feet, her dirty face wore a Chinese look of expressionless resignation. The fields of China, that land of walls, never have fences or any other form of barrier, so that there is no such crime as trespassing, even for hunters; but hereabouts the fields were cut up by furrows or

ditches into strips six feet wide and of varying lengths. It took us nearly as long to get into the city by a water-gate as to reach it because farmers and their wives with loaded or unloaded boats, mingled with all manner of craft and cargo creating the usual Chinese hubbub, left us to fight our way through a welter of floating things, working at cross purposes, all the way to our landing-place.

Part of our trip had been in the moat outside the city wall. On the narrow sloping space between them thousands of sheets of brown paper were spread out to dry, before being made into "spirit money." That is the main occupation of Shaohsing, even though B., who had lived here for years but had not seen much of the rest of China, was mistaken in saying that all or even almost all of that stuff burned in China is made here, for I found other cities later where it is a great industry. But towns and regions specialize in trades throughout the kingless Middle Kingdom, and between 70 and 80 per cent of the people of Shaohsing are supported through the making of this false wealth. All over China it is the custom to burn silver and gold ingots before graves, both at the time of burial and on stated occasions thereafter, unto remote generations, in order that the deceased shall not lack pocket-money in the after-world. But as the Chinese, though incredibly foolish in many ways, are well supplied with common sense, they ceased many centuries ago from offering up real money, just as they adopted horses and slaves and concubines made of paper instead of immolating real servants and killing live animals to accompany their dead, and use instead coarse brown paper folded in the form of silver and gold nuggets and pasted over with tin-foil. As enormous quantities of this succumb to filial piety, Shaohsing has a very lucrative business. The tin ore comes down from Yünnan Province and is poured into ingots or cut into bars about half an inch thick. In America we would roll these out in a few minutes between mighty rollers. In China men sit at a kind of anvil and pound incessantly day after day, taking ten, even fifteen days to reduce a piece of tin to the form in which it is pasted over the bamboo-paper, usually by women and children. These squeezeed sheets are carried in great loads at the ends of coolie-poles to hundreds of homes, an ingenious Chinese system of weighing making the workers responsible for the amount intrusted to them, and dirty women, the wives of coolies and peasants, earn five or ten cents a day by folding and pasting them into the form of ingots. Some are painted a yel-

lowish color with a curious bamboo brush, thus making the "gold" ones somewhat more expensive than the "silver."

Usually Shaohsing resounds from one year to another with the beating of tin, but the pounders were just then on strike, "discussing labor," as the Chinese put it, so that I missed something as typical of life in this aged town as its foot-boats and the stink of its canals. The idol-money makers are combined in complicated *hongs* or labor-unions, with a three-year term of apprenticeship that must be paid for by the learner, and the workers are less servile than in many parts of China. The pounders work only six hours a day, to avoid becoming muscle-bound, and unlike most Chinese they become fearless bruisers, since they can "make a fist" and use it. Normally there are constant processions of squeegeed sheets, eighty pounds in each small package, trotting through the streets, especially during the afternoon and evening; now there were only a few hundred of them in the whole twenty-four hours. How much toiling there is everywhere in China to get or make or transport perfectly useless things! But then, do we not have chewing-gum millionaires whose youthful scions parade even through China as important gentlemen?

In the afternoon we climbed a low hill behind B.'s house and hospital, not so much for the view of Shaohsing—though here lay spread out the city wall filled with a sea of blue-black tile roofs, the waterways and ruined pagoda, and the hills round about even to the tomb of the "Great Yü"—as to see Shaohsing's receptacle for cast-off babies. Though I had heard much of the custom in China, this was my first actual proof of it. The receptacle was the height of my head and some five feet square, made of granite slabs of that length and some twenty inches wide, set horizontally like the boards of a box. Half the top was open to the air and the birds and to such beasts as could climb the sides. The stench was almost evidence enough, but rather than report anything on hearsay I scrambled to the top, with a boost from B., stood gazing at the scene about me for a moment to steady my nerves, then looked down into the thing. It was about half full of dead babies, most of them not more than eighteen inches long, thrown pell-mell together. None of them were completely naked, though a rotting foot or arm stuck out here and there. One of the score of putrid little corpses was in a coffin as flimsy and as carelessly made as an orange-box; the others were wrapped in grass mats, old baskets, quilted rags, or anything of the kind available. It is as much to save the expense of burying dead babies as to get rid of live



ones that these receptacles, of which I was to see and hear more in southern China, exist. But there is no question that girl babies are still made away with, and now and then a boy, it is rumored, though that is a crime.

The pagoda on a hill overlooking Shaohsing, such as protects the *feng-shui* and brings good luck to almost every town in China, had been struck by lightning years before; and only recently had B. found a man brave enough to tell him its name and story. On another occasion he had stopped to photograph a man who was combing a pig, and was surprised to have him get into a great rage instead of showing the usual pleased smile. "I am not combing the pig for his sake," the man explained at the end of his plaint at being permanently linked with it, "but because I have to sleep with him." Not a few finical Chinese shave their pigs for the same reason, evidently because uncombed or unshaved bristles prick; certainly the minute beings that inhabit a pig's skin would hardly trouble a Chinese.

Beggars get wrecks of boats and paddle about Shaohsing, accepting any filth thrown into them. One young fellow, otherwise looking very sturdy, had an arm which seemed in the last stages of putrefaction. B. had often offered to dress it if he would come to the hospital, but he steadily declined. Finally, suspicion creeping into his soul, B. caught hold of the arm as he passed one morning, giving it a mild tug. It came off easily in his hand. Made of rice-dough, cleverly painted, it was indeed a work of art, for it had fooled even this experienced surgeon for weeks. The perfectly well arm for which it did public duty was tightly tied up inside the fellow's clothes. We reflected on the case of a student we had known in college, who spent more time and went through more labor to write out his examinations on his cuffs and tiny rolls of paper than it would have taken to learn his lessons thoroughly.

But the great interest of my former colleague was in his flukes, whose ravages are worse in this region than those of the related hook-worm in others. B. had known for years, as no one can help knowing who gets beyond the foreignized fringe of China, that the people wash their vegetables and rice, their night-soil buckets, their clothes, and often even dip up their drinking-water in the same spots, whether in shallow fish-ponds or in the canals and moat along which watery boat-loads of human filth as well as unmeticulous passengers constantly travel. He knew that they ate fish from these same mud-holes, and that there was every possible means of infection which a people utterly ig-

norant of the line between filth and cleanliness could devise ; but still he could not run to earth the mystery of the fluke, until he turned his attention to the water-chestnuts of these crapulous waters, which the people make one of their principal foods. He found that a very tiny snail living on these carried the germs, or the eggs, of the being, not unlike a tiny flat fish with a sucking mouth, so prevalent about Shaohsing that a single treatment sometimes yields a quart jar full of them from a victim. American laws forbid the introduction of such things into our land even for the purposes of study, but B., not to be stumped by minor difficulties, infected himself from a patient, came back to the United States, and added a real contribution to medical science. I hold no brief for the missionary, but I could not but compare this ardent unselfish toiler for humanity with some of the fat, pompous, and "successful" members of our class whom I have run across in other places.

A coolie trotted half an hour through the crowded narrow streets in which tin-pounding was beginning again, over humped stone bridges and along canal embankments, before he dropped my baggage at the dingy little shop serving as ticket-office for the launch to Hangchow. It was a six-hour journey, and the "first-class" fare—that is, on the launch itself instead of on one of the long narrow boats it towed—was about a "Mex" dollar. We rode out through another water-gate and along more canals that now and again spread out into fish-ponds or lakes or rice-fields, winding around hills into a new labyrinth of waterways crossed by flat stone bridges so low that they made us lie flat down on the upper deck. Many men and boys, looking at a distance like huge birds, were up in the trees along the way gathering candlenuts, from which all this region makes its lights. Now and again we passed a foot-boat-man nonchalantly kicking his way homeward. But customs are local in China, and both the foot-boats and those with the gaily painted hulls soon disappeared as suddenly as they had come ; though one of them now and then gets down to Hangchow, I never saw one again.

Where the launch abandoned us some distance from the Chekiang capital on the opposite shore of the river up which sweeps the mighty tide rivaled only by that of the Bay of Fundy, further transportation was in the hands of one of those monopolies that abound in China, which issued at an exorbitant rate tickets good for coolies to carry one's stuff on into town. As a foreigner I might have

kicked the monopolist out of the way, lugged my belongings outside, and called a rickshaw, scores of which eager for fares were not allowed near the launch station. For the crude ferry-boats across the river were free, maintained by merchants eager for trade with the countrymen, and rickshaws are not lacking on the other side. But if two coolies cost more than the whole six-hour trip from Shaohsing, at least they trotted all the way to the heart of the city where my family was awaiting me.

Hangchow is famous in Chinese annals, and is dear to the hearts of the Celestials. Once the capital of China, as it is to-day of Chekiang Province, it won exorbitant praises from Marco Polo, who was for three years governor of a neighboring city and evidently, one reads between his lines, ran into Hangchow for a round of gaiety and a dip into the flesh-pot which his own station did not afford. For once the Venetian waxes almost eloquent, calling this "beyond dispute the finest and noblest city in the world," a commentary surely on those of medieval Europe.

In 1138 the southern Sung installed their capital at what Marco calls "Kinsay," and for a century it maintained all the *éclat* of the dynasty, until in its turn it crumbled under the heavy blows of Kublai Khan. At the height of the Sung rule it must have been a great city indeed; the remnants of palaces and temples alone prove that, even though it was almost totally destroyed by the Taipings. The original Caucasian traveler in China, who describes "Kinsay" more fully than any other place he visited in his wandering lifetime, speaks with unwonted enthusiasm of its immense inclosure, of the princely merchants who lived there like kings, among their wives, languorous and superfine creatures, by the crystal lake, many miles in circumference, covered with palaces, monasteries, and temples, its two isles decorated each with an immense house royally furnished, constructed expressly for any citizen who desired to receive his friends, give fêtes, or celebrate another marriage, and where sometimes a hundred receptions were going on at the same time. He was particularly struck by its "twelve thousand" stone bridges, not unlike those that hump their backs over the canals of his native Venice, and to have counted, or taken for granted, more than any one else has ever been able to find there. The flagstone-paved streets also won extravagant words; of its innumerable police (something incongruous here, surely!), the three hundred public baths where hot water always ran, the ten markets bursting with fresh fish, meats, vegetables, magnificent fruits, the multitude of

boats and floating houses moored on the lake and in the canals, all sculptured and painted like gilded palaces, of the splendid carriages that circulated incessantly in the streets, he could not say enough. The inhabitants carried no arms, had none in their houses; never did one hear the noise of a dispute or a quarrel. The people were gentle, hospitable, kindly to the stranger as to their compatriots, of exquisite courtesy. The gardens of the emperor were delectable, full of fruit-trees, of shade and playing fountains; the vast halls of the palace were everywhere ornate with beautiful paintings, representing birds, beasts, warriors, and lovely ladies; poets, philosophers, artists were beyond computation. The courtezans, the number of which was such that even Marco does not dare to give it, for fear of not being believed—surely we could have taken the word of an Italian gentleman on this point!—were adorned with all the attractions of the spirit as well as of luxury, so subtle, so intoxicating, that they made of “Kinsay” a paradise after which all—including Marco himself, it is evident—sighed.

I know not whether Marco Polo was homesick for the smells of his native city and found the capital of all that “Manji” which fell under his conquering Mongol master a reminder of it, or whether the peerless hospitality of “Kinsay” included unstinted liquid exhilaration for the stranger within its walls. But surely no Chinese city was ever so closely akin to paradise, as I imagine to myself that disputed realm, as Messer Marco pictures it. No doubt the Venice of his day, judged from what one may smell in it still, was in one particular at least no modern model. Did the roving Venetian ignore certain facts out of politeness to his erstwhile Mongol lord; did his amanuensis scrub his tale with soap and lye; was it out of style to be realistic in those far-off days, or was Venice so feculent in his time that he did not even find China dirty? At any rate, except on the impossible hypothesis that the Chinese of only seven centuries ago were as keen for cleanliness as their descendants of to-day are indifferent to it, the great traveler has given us as false a picture in at least that one regard as Prescott has in his otherwise excellent story of the Incas. Never once, unless I have read him badly, does he so much as imply that China struck him as slovenly in its personal habits.

To each land its faults and its virtues, and I am willing to grant that Hangchow is to this day one of the most beautiful cities—of China, when the weather behaves; even in the almost constant rain

or under the heavy-as-lead skies that reigned during my week in it, there were many suggestions of what it might be on bright summer days. Spread out among mountainous hills between the river and the West Lake, with a people just familiar enough with foreigners to have passed the stage of gathering in staring crowds about one, yet without having reached that of showing their scorn by dropping their racial courtesy, "Kinsay" is still worth coming far to see. The principal business street is paved with mammoth stone slabs as in the days when it won Polo's admiration, and along it can be bought, among many other things, the finest of silks, while even foreign ladies may drift into its little Mohammedan mosque, decorated with flaring Arabic instead of Chinese characters. Silk manufactories, on the dividing-line between the family-hut process still mainly in vogue among China's industries and the impersonal modern factory so out of keeping with the Chinese temperament, may be visited for the searching. In the former Manchu section of the city, largely destroyed when China took on the name of republic, the independent ruler of Chekiang Province had built and was still increasing wide modern streets and roads capable of bearing automobiles. Of temples picturesquely pitched on hillsides, of humped bridges over crowded canals sheer into which fall endless walls of uninviting shops and dwellings, of long vistas of gilded shop-signs, there are many, though they may not reach the fabulous numbers of the exhilarated Venetian.

A strike was once declared in a Hangchow school because a foreign teacher queried the statement in a student's composition that the West Lake is the most beautiful spot on earth. It would probably be difficult to impanel a Chinese jury, if such a thing existed, that would side with the pedagogue; in Chinese minds the beauty of Hangchow has long been what the French call an *idée fixe*, and the theme of innumerable poems. With the "needle pagoda" standing forth on one hilly shore, the almost bright red one, a great contrast in form, of the "thunder peak," dimly seen across it against the background of further hills, on bright days mirrored in its waters, the islands and the causeways breaking up its clear surface, here and there dotted with boats, the West Lake is a sight not to be seen elsewhere in China. We saw the famous old "thunder peak" pagoda during its declining months, already a semi-ruin that even the foolhardy would not have attempted to climb, yet a striking monument even among the many pagodas of China. For on the day that a rival general was about to enter Hangchow from the neighboring province during recent fighting

in the Shanghai area, the ancient landmark collapsed, like an aged sire who could endure the wickedness of the modern world no longer. Naturally the Chinese considered this an important omen, and the invasion failed. The southern Sung emperors lived on the lake, especially the Imperial Island, and the Manchu K'ang Hsi and Ch'ien Lung built more palaces upon it. To-day the islands are covered with temples, grottoes, tea-houses, that make delightful places of retreat, while causeways lifted on piles of stone lead from wooded and flowered place to place. But—the modern automobile highway out to the first island was built at the expense of a Jew who grew wealthy by commerce in China, in return for the privilege of building a residence-palace upon it. Even on raw clouded autumn days we were often tempted to drift off across the lake in one of the little boats moored on the edge of the modernized shore. The Chinese go more often in groups, as befits a gregarious people, and in the pleasant season veritable floating tea-houses dot the West Lake far into the night. Facing it are more hotels of the type which the Chinese consider modern and comfortable than perhaps anywhere else, for throughout the land Hangchow has great vogue as a watering-place.

Of many possible excursions by land or water about the Chekiang capital we found one into the hills beyond the lake most inviting. Whether we crossed the lake by the ancient causeway or skirted its shore we were almost sure to meet a sedan-chair party, perhaps a dozen strong, returning from the temples beyond, for rickshaws cannot get far into the hills. Buddhas carved in the living rock, monasteries scattered up the valleys and pitched on the flanks of the hills, give them the air of all China's places of pilgrimage. Here and there one may come upon groups of once gaudy mud deities melting away under sun, wind, and rain because the structure that housed them has fallen; and the pious have pasted bits of paper over the eyes of the gods, that they may not see the sad state into which their unworthy subjects have let them fall. One may run across as delightful examples here of splendid bronze lanterns, more than man-high, as in Peking itself. Here, too, are evidences of a renaissance in Buddhism; for there is much repairing, and repainting of the gaudy colors, constructing of new altars, even of brand-new temples, though soldiers have occupied and are hastening the destruction of many.

In the days of Marco Polo there were many soldiers in Hangchow, some Chinese but most of them compatriots of the "grand khan." Under the Manchus the garrison consisted of 10,000 men, of

whom 3000 were Chinese. To-day there are probably more, but they are neither Mongol nor Manchu, being locally recruited under the orders of a military governor who openly regarded his province as independent—even of foreign treaties, so that Western firms whose goods were taxed in repudiation of these international agreements could only protest. The Chekiang ruler also held Shanghai, in another man's province; hence much of the recent fighting in this region; for the arsenal at Lungwha and the mint at Hangchow are much coveted in these days of struggling Tuchuns. The mint is one of the show-places of the ancient Sung capital. Here 40,000 "Mex" dollars a day are stamped as if they were washers or can-tops out of strips of metal which gossip has it are gradually losing their honest ratio of 89 per cent silver in an alloy of copper, the fat bust of Yuan Shih-kai still gleaming from one side of them. These cumbersome coins, known to the Chinese as "one piece money," kick about underfoot everywhere, either as blanks or with the imprint of the minting-machines upon them; the perforated sheets out of which they are cut lie like scrap-iron about the greasy floors, and coolies are constantly carrying all this and the bullion from abroad to and fro; but it is not these simple fellows who make away with the product of the Hangchow mint.

We had one day the unhappy thought of taking a boat from the city to the Grand Canal. The imbroglio among those competing for our patronage not even the riot of clamoring rickshaw-men outside a Chinese station could have bettered, but we moved away at last in a huge clumsy uncovered craft that crept so slowly through solid miles of its fellows level-full of sloppy human offal that the day was already growing senile when we emerged from the city walls. Even then nothing could induce the boatmen to make a single hasty movement, so that we got barely to where boats slide down the mud slopes into the Grand Canal, to be hauled up again by curious windlasses such as might have been conceived in the days of Troy.

The canals of Hangchow, unfit to be mentioned without a handkerchief to the nose, do not connect with the lake—luckily, or it would stink unto the next province—and they are some four feet higher than the Grand Canal, for K'ang Hsi did not wish to lose his water-supply. In olden days one might go all the way from the southern Sung capital to that of Kublai Khan, from Hangchow to Peking, by China's great artificial waterway and the prolongation of the Pei-ho and the Tungchow Canal. It was a journey of well over a thousand

miles, even without making the angle of the railroads of to-day to take in Shanghai, unimportant in the time of the canal building. The section from Hangchow to Chinkiang on the Yang Tze was dug by the southern Sung early in the seventh century. From there to where it intersects what until the middle of the last century was the Yellow River, now vagabonding in the north, the Yang Tze and some lakes sufficed; but it was not until near the end of the thirteenth century that the northern portion was cut under the Mongols. This was more difficult, for in the Shantung mountains there are a few primitive kinds of locks, and the digging was often stony. To-day large parts of it are silted up, and others have fallen into the hands of bandits, so that the good old days when one might follow in a house-boat the route of the tribute rice all the way from the capital of "Manji" to that of "Cathay" are gone, perhaps forever.

It was a long railroad ride back to Shanghai through level lands of mulberry-groves, now in winter nudity, the trees trimmed to mere knots, like Irish shillalahs, and standing only five or six feet above the ground. The cars were bitterly cold, one's feet freezing, one's breath going out in what looked like great puffs of smoke; yet vegetable-gardens were still producing, old women and a few men still shivering about in them under the leaden skies, from time to time thrusting their chapped hands into their long sleeves. Then the mulberry-groves changed almost suddenly to what were evidently rice-fields, though waterless now and covered only with tufts of yellow-brown stubble. Work for the next year's crop had begun. The dead-flat fields as far as the eye could see were furrowed into strips from six to ten feet wide by often considerable lengths with newly shoveled ditches, the big clods laid out in close rows on either side in far more military precision than that displayed by the boyish soldiers, hands also in sleeves, fooling about drill-fields and at the stations along the way. Numberless circular thatched huts, under which in the rice season water-buffaloes march round and round doing their part in the vast irrigation system of China, were no more numerous than the weather-blackened coffins still patiently awaiting burial. The wheels stood upright for winter now, and the sluiceways, unless they had been bodily carried home for protection, were covered with straw within the wall-less watering-huts.

Though few do so, surely all Americans passing the ancient little city of Sungkiang, barely twenty-five miles out of Shanghai on this Hangchow line, should stop there, for nowhere else in the

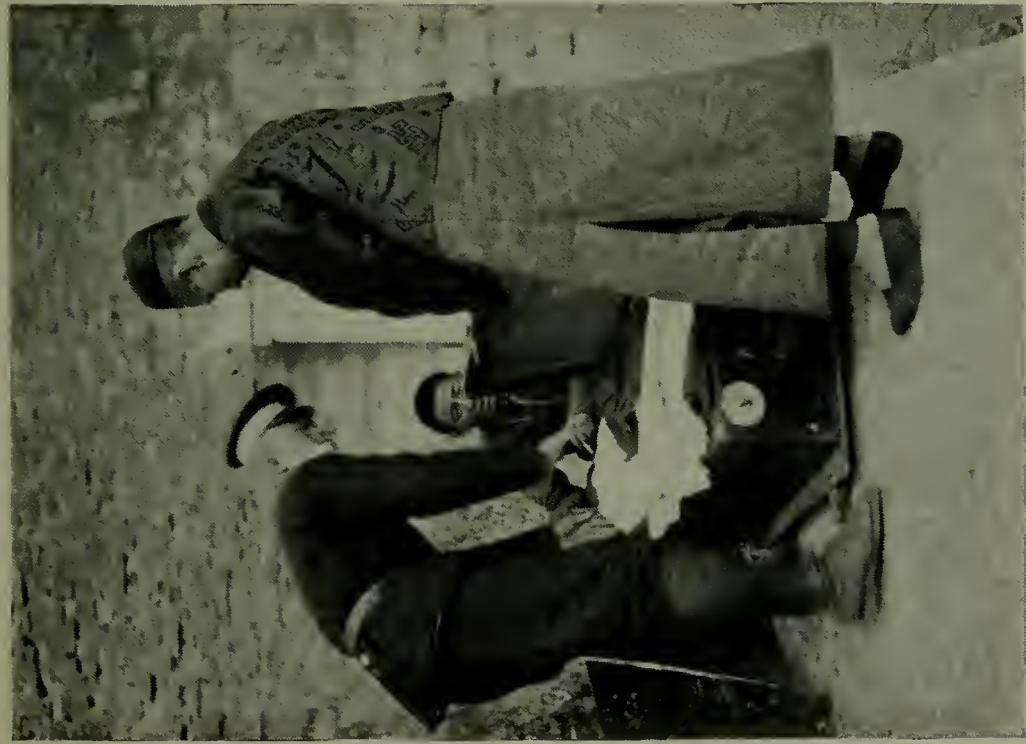


Orient, I believe, is there an American god. Hard by the Temple of Confucius, inside the walls of a city that is busier now in its crowded extramural suburbs, stands the temple-tomb of General Frederick Ward, organizer of the "Ever Victorious Army" of Taiping days, for which his British successor, "Chinese Gordon," is usually given the credit. Born in Salem of witchcraft fame nearly a century ago, Ward developed swiftly from high school student to sailor, to soldier of the French during the Crimean War, then, after a vain attempt to become a ship's broker and "turn respectable," into the genuine adventurer, interested in life only for the excitements it had in store for him. The best days of the Taiping rebels who all but wrecked the Manchu dynasty were over when Ward proposed to the merchants of Shanghai to recapture from 10,000 of them Sungkiang, then the prefectural city of the Shanghai district, and to this day speaking the old dialect of the region almost in its pristine form. If we note his birthplace, it is needless to add that he set a price on his services. Financed by the willing merchants, he picked up about a hundred foreigners—sailors, beachcombers, the remnants of various expeditions, any one who knew anything of the science of arms—turned them into officers and began training Chinese recruits. Gradually he cleared up the region about Shanghai, once saving that city itself from capture, receiving his fee for each victory. Then for a time he disappeared, but turned up again at the head of three regiments of about 8000 Chinese, trained and armed in Western fashion, and took to using the military drill-field of Sungkiang near which his tomb stands to-day. When he captured Ningpo in the autumn of 1861 the French and British forces coöperating with the Manchus ceased considering him an outlaw adventurer and welcomed his aid. But the foreign consuls protested so strongly against the presence of their nationals in a Chinese force that Ward determined to have no more of them, but to make officers instead of what were in those days known as "Manila-men." He and a few other Americans outwitted their consul by claiming Chinese citizenship; Ward himself even adopted native manners, married the daughter of an influential Chinese, was made "admiral and general" to the emperor and a mandarin of the highest grade. But for the lack of an amanuensis he might have been another Marco Polo. Long before this his force had been named by imperial decree the "Ever Victorious Army," though there was then more hope than accomplishment in the name.

But Ward was brave unto carelessness, and in September, 1862,

still little over thirty, he was mortally wounded at Tzeki of the great earthenware *k'angs* while reconnoitering by himself; having no attention or modern surgery at his command, he died in Ningpo shortly afterward. Legend has it that he was loved by his soldiers, a few of whom still live in this region, whereas his successor, Gordon, a stricter disciplinarian, was merely respected. Ward had planned, in case the *Trent* affair resulted in war with England, to seize British warships and merchant vessels in Chinese waters; he gave \$10,000 to the Union cause and offered to come home and take part in the Civil War—evidently not as a corporal—but he was killed before an answer came from our minister in China. He had converted his large possessions into cash and negotiable securities, which disappeared when he was killed. An English officer last seen with him was accused of the theft, and there were long proceedings in the U. S. Consular Court at Shanghai.

By Ward's own request he was buried near the Temple of Confucius on his old drill-field just inside the walls of Sungkiang, but the style of his tomb would probably be a surprise to him, certainly to his people at home. It is a temple, erected entirely by the Chinese without foreign help or suggestions, such as they have built for many centuries as the tombs of their famous men, who are virtually deified. Compared with the Sungkiang temple of the great Confucius near-by, with its gleaming yellow roof of imperial tiles, or with many others of the huge temple-tombs of the successful men of Chinese history, this pathetic little gray-walled inclosure, covered with ordinary tiles, in an open space inside the West Gate, littered here and there with graves and unburied coffins, amid an intramural calm in contrast to the swarming suburb with its long street of shops outside, is not imposing; yet it is several times more so than the tomb the adventurer would probably have had in Massachusetts. Though the temple itself is but a single-room building, an altar with the spirit-tablet of Ward, and all the other features of a Chinese temple, are there, and now and again Chinese still come to burn incense and bow down before their hero of Taiping days in what is just as much worship as are their genuflections to the other gods of China. Until the recent general decline of the custom there was official worship on set dates, the chief district officials attending. A conspicuous tablet in red and black tells those who know their Chinese that :



As Nanking was under martial law every one except foreigners was carefully examined at the city gates



While martial law reigned in Nanking police in full equipment were stationed before each foreign compound



A gentleman of Nanking vicinity sailing his private yacht in quest of water-chestnuts, equally popular with the Chinese and with disease-germs



Some almost forgotten dynasty still encumbers the soil near Nanking with their monuments, the puppy-dog expressions of which suggest gentle-minded rulers even in those far-off centuries

An illustrious man from beyond the seas, he came 6000 *li* to accomplish great deeds and acquire immortal fame by shedding his noble blood. Because of him Sungkiang shall be a happy land for a thousand autumns.

It is typical of their notions of the rest of the world to find the Chinese, so given to extravagance in statements of this kind, greatly underestimating the distance the illustrious man came to accomplish his great deeds; it is at least 25,000 *li* from Salem to Sungkiang. Nor are there any notable signs that this commonplace Chinese city of dirty canals and picturesque misery enjoys more than its natural share of happiness.

The temple is not badly kept, as things go in China. There are some trees and flowers in season, inside the compound, and the whole place has been recently repaired and repainted. Rice-straw and cabbages were drying on everything but the altar itself, and the woman caretaker had gone to market to "buy things," leaving her small son locked inside, so that I had to scale the tile-roofed compound wall; but worse things from our Western point of view are true even of the temple of the "Great Yü." The woman and her husband, who works in varnish, have free use of the little lodge-house at the gate, but the two "Mex" dollars a month allotted the caretaker in the early days of enthusiasm ceased even before the revolution, and tipping American visitors are few and far between. Except for the mainly advertising pages of an inexplicably popular American weekly that decorated the mud walls of the lodge-house, the only foreign hint about the place was an unfinished stone recently set up by the "Frederick Ward Post of the American Legion" of Shanghai, which seemed rather too bad; certainly the plan of the missionary who guided me there to live to see the temple replaced by a lot surrounded by linked chains, with only a carved stone inside, would be still less appropriate. But missionaries, of course, must attack "idolatry" wherever they find it. In a way the most touching feature of the whole memorial is the mound of earth, like a common Chinese grave, behind the temple, but within the inclosure, under which Ward's big mastiff is buried. After the death of its master, the story goes, the dog refused to take food and went wandering about looking for him until it died of starvation. The Chinese are not fond of dogs and rarely make pets of them. They keep birds and crickets and even cats, but though dogs swarm in China they are merely endured, miserable, uncared-for curs who scavenge their living where

they can. But the Chinese recognized the love of the Western barbarian for the big mastiff, who used to go up and down the streets of Sungkiang behind him, the terror of any who dared touch him.

Ward's natural successor would have been his second in command, one Burgevine, born in North Carolina in 1836. But the Southerner was overbearing and, there remains little doubt, dishonest and disloyal, and he was soon discharged by the financing merchants of Shanghai. Captain Holland temporarily took over, and then came the Englishman, "Chinese" Gordon, who, after the way of the world, did least of the work and won most of the credit for the "Ever Victorious Army," which left him famous until he became more so by his death at Arab hands at Khartoum. Burgevine went over to the rebels and tried to get Gordon to join him and establish a new dynasty! A British-Carolina emperor of China somehow appeals to the imagination, but the staid Britisher seems to have had so little of that in his make-up that he "peached" on Burgevine instead. Our consul deported the Carolinian to Yokohama, but he came back to Amoy, "got lickered up," and started to rejoin the rebels. He was captured by the Imperial Chinese forces, and while a great argument raged between two governments as to which had jurisdiction over him, he having once claimed Chinese citizenship in order to remain in Chinese service, Burgevine was opportunely drowned by the capsizing of what the Celestials call a ferry-boat. It goes without saying that they have never made a temple-enthroned god of the man from North Carolina.

## CHAPTER III

### UP THE LOWER YANG TZE

**T**HE journey from Shanghai northward to Nanking, thence west to the great interior treaty-port of Hankow, is much more common tourist ground than the nearer one around Hangchow Bay. Whether one makes the first part of it on the railway that, with the help of a ferry, leads on to Peking, to Manchuria, to Russia and Europe, even to Japan for that matter, or takes one of the comfortable steamers under several flags, including the Chinese, that ply the lower Yang Tze as regularly as ocean liners across the Pacific—and at just about as extravagant fares—one will miss some things and see some others, none of them perhaps of prime importance. Possibly the most significant thing on the river journey is the model town of a Chinese owning big modern cotton-mills there; but the mere traveler does not come to China primarily to see how well it has copied Western methods and misfortunes.

The outside of one city wall and the wide, boat-bearing moat along it is about all of Soochow that the average traveler on the Shanghai-Nanking Railway sees; even that is missed by those who go and come on the Yang Tze steamers. Probably most foreigners in China know the place mainly from the "Soochow tubs," like giant custard-bowls, so excellent a substitute for the more orthodox bath-tub in a land where water must often be heated and carried by hand, or at least by coolie shoulder; for so great is the displacement of the human form squatted like an Inca mummy within it that a bucketful or two assures immersion to the nostrils. But as we could not treat so famous a city so cavalierly, my wife and I, taking a note from the leaflet of Chinese history, rather than go around to a gate, crossed the canal-moat for a copper and entered the place through a breach in the crumbling old city wall. There is an old Chinese saying to the effect that Soochow and Hangchow below and heaven above are all that is worth while, something corresponding to the "see Naples and die" that has so often been misunderstood by finicking tourists. It is fitting that they be mentioned in the same breath, for they have much, too much in fact, in common. Soochow has

been called the Venice of China, which verges on libel, yet is not without its scent of truth. Yet like those of its Chekiang prototype, its canals are less painful to look upon than to smell, and if an excursion through them is an odoriferous experience it is not otherwise entirely unpleasant, for it is chiefly they which give Soochow its undeniable picturesqueness. It has, to be sure, a striking pagoda, newly renovated along with the temple beneath it, and, as in almost all these ancient Buddhist structures which everywhere pierce the sky-line of China, an extremely narrow winding stairway of stone within, each step worn hollow by millions of feet striving upward for hundreds of years, with far-reaching views through openings, in this case with galleries, at each of the nine, eleven, or thirteen stories. Below are narrow streets swarming with native life, a broad flat expanse of dark-tiled roofs—but so have thousands of other Chinese cities. But ancient Soochow's real claim to fame is its canals, over which vault everywhere old arched stone bridges high enough to let pass its myriad boats. Along them the houses sit with their backs sheer out over the waters of the canals, into which falls all the family garbage, and out of which is dipped the family's cooking and drinking water. Everything goes into the canal: windlass buckets go up and down with rice to wash; pigs are hoisted squealing into the backs of shops, where they will presently appear in bits fit for the chopsticks of those entering from the front, facing always on the narrow, crowded, sunless streets inside. The canals are so narrow that the steps at the backs of the houses, on the lowest of which foot-bound women kneel over the family clothing, are let sidewise into them to save space. House-boats are everywhere, not merely the comfortable ones aspiring to foreign patronage and those enticing the wealthy Chinese with tea-tables and gay decorations, but all manner of craft down to the floating sties in which live porcine-mannered families that are born, married, and die in them, rarely spending a night of their lives on solid ground. One can end up out at delightful rockeries and temples, with labyrinthine ways over water where lotus blooms in season, and still be sculled back into the moat in time to catch the evening train.

Chinkiang, where railway, Grand Canal, and the river fittingly called Son of the Sea meet, is inviting to the artist for its two island pagodas, its boat life, and the wheelbarrows that wait for fares, their patient drivers sitting at ease on the high cross-bar of their vehicles standing upright against street walls. A side trip, all but unknown to the foreign travelers up and down the lower Yang Tze, can be made from a tea-shop ticket-office down on the crowded waterfront, by native launch across the great river and thence incongruously by Ford due



north to a city ruled for three years by Marco Polo. Forging to it is beyond doubt more perilous than the way by which the Venetian gentleman reached it in his day, which was probably by semi-royal barge on the Grand Canal. Wild drivers pick up the imprudent traveler of to-day where the launch sets him down on a muddy river-bank and dash inland along a raised dirt road at a snorting, careering, jerking speed which one expects at every moment to land the maltreated vehicle in a paddy-field or entangle it with a strolling water-buffalo. If the operator can run over a chicken or kill a dog during the journey, even though he has to dodge from side to extreme side of the lofty road to do so, his soul overflows with glee, and to say that he is Chinese is equivalent to stating that he gives far more attention to the abominable contrivance which constitutes a Ford's voice than to the steering-wheel.

One will slow down to a Marco Polo pace at the parody on a railway station at which the hair resumes its normal position, and be back in the China of long ago by the time the ponderous boat that serves as ferry across the city moat, crowded with loads of reeds like slowly moving haystacks, has been poled to a newly renovated gate of the city wall. This same ferry-boat may not have been in use on the day that Messer Marco arrived at "Yan-giu," to take up his station as provincial governor for Kublai Khan, but surely the same ferryman still furnishes the snail-like motive power. Nor does the town itself, known to-day as Yangchowfu, seem to have changed much since Marco's time. Its streets are as narrow as any in China; the dull gray, sodden brick house-walls, so close in many places that one all but rubs elbows on either side, shut out the sun completely from the flagstones slimy with the constant slopping of water-carriers, for the steadying sticks that float on the tops of their buckets are far from effective. Scalp and eye diseases are wide-spread; blind story-tellers make strange noises in Chinese rhythms, and on the edge of the city stagnates the Grand Canal that once teemed with shipping from Hangchow to Peking. There is no such traffic on it in these days of railways, steamers, and Fords as there was when the Venetian governor seems often to have run down for a spree in the paradise so recently the Sung capital, and "Yan-giu" is probably not the town it used to be. Its people are not of that supercilious manner toward foreigners common along the near-by Yang Tze, and the contrast between the present-day method of getting to the place and its own Homeric means of transportation is worth the trip—or would be but for the dread of the return journey.

Kiangsu estimates its inhabitants at 620 to the square mile, out-

done in China only by Shantung, claiming 680. Cities and towns almost constantly rub elbows along the Grand Canal as it pushes northward, the crude forms of transportation along it so slow that one may go to Peking and back in the reserved and cushioned comfort of the "Blue Express"—timed now since the "Lincheng affair" to avoid bandit-infested areas by night and protected by many new guards, to say nothing of long rows of undrilled soldiers at every station—sooner than to canal-side towns a hundred miles away. Short-distance travelers who cannot be accommodated on the daily express must fight with a howling mass of coolies at the waist-high rat-hole through which tickets are sold, with the time-honored squeeze of a few coppers each, at the station opposite Nanking, fight out of the throng again when their mission is accomplished, only to wage pitched battle once more for standing-room on the aged train on which soldiers, given free sway if only the military dictators will keep them off the express, have commandeered all the seats and serenely ignore the ticket-collector.

Every mud-hole or pond along the way is dotted with ducks, the hillsides covered with them, their keepers somewhere near. Morning and evening find the duck-herder driving his charges with a long pole terminating in a lash; during the day, often with a companion, he urges them through streams and across swamps, anywhere that they can pick up food; for China is as much the land of ducks as of pigs. Everywhere the overcrowding of humanity is apparent. The Hwei River, cutting eastward across the new province we have entered, empties into the Hung Tseh Hu, merely a vast mud-hole for all its name of lake. One of the engineers who helped to dig the Panama Canal studied a project of emptying it into the Yang Tze or the ocean, for the summer floods are always a serious disaster, raising yearly the question whether the high waters will cover the wheat before it ripens; and the draining of the miscalled lake would add many acres on which the population could continue its over-breeding. But like so many things in China nothing has come of it.

Northward from Pengpu on the Hwei, an open town that has become the military capital of Anhwei Province—though Anking, far up the Yang Tze, retains some of its political ascendancy—the world shades into bare, brown, treeless Shantung and north China, of which I had already seen enough. Yan-hsien-sheng on the Grand Canal, where wheelbarrows compete with water-buffalo carts of two big solid wooden wheels behind and a little one in front, the origin perhaps of the tricycle, is exactly on the dividing-line between the wheat and the rice

of north and south China, the fields abutting on one another. Peking carts, even camels, sometimes come down to the Hwei; below it wheelbarrows and carrying-coolies fitted to the narrow, winding stoned paths through the rice-fields take up the task of transportation in its southern form. On the Hwei, up which I made my way westward on a popping motor-launch that monopolized all attention within hearing, there were countless junks; and even where there was no boating, men fished, mainly with nets, some in boot-trousers of soft cowhide, the hairy side in and reaching to the waist, wading in noisome pools and stagnant streams to gather everything, from tiny hybrids between shrimps and snails to water-bulbs, that can only have sucked their nourishment from the filth with which the thick waters are impregnated.

Though Hweiyuen is not a large town, it has a great mission station where American men and women maintain an orphanage filled with cast-off girls, in some cases picked up literally from the garbage-heaps, a hospital where the gall-stones frequent even in small children of this district are removed, an important school, and a workshop where old women with bound feet and diseases of the eye sit in their quilted, seldom-washed garments and embroider cloth with stories and legends of Chinese history and filial piety over patterns of complicated little figures cut out from copies of New York newspapers that find their way so far afield. Yet within sight of the church-tower of the mission, which has been there at least since Boxer days, the people are so superstitious that they run from a kodak, there is a brisk manufacture of incense-sticks, and right past the door of the foreign establishment poor people were burning patches of paper from the town to the execution-grounds for the souls of dead criminals, not out of pure charity, but for fear of the harm which unappeased spirits may do the living.

Since "Nanking" means "southern capital," as "Peking" does "northern," no doubt its proper place is in a volume on southern China; yet it is really a northern city, with a moistureless, dusty air, donkeys and wheeled vehicles, much more in common with the great dry, treeless regions north of it than with that half of the ancient Celestial Empire to the south. Famous as it is, however, Nanking is not an easy city to find. In fact some foreign visitors come away concluding that there is none worth finding, because they do not go far enough inside the city wall to discover any real city, and see only the railway-wharf suburb of Hsiakwan. But it is worth coming to Nanking if only to see the wall that incloses it, the wildest as well as the

longest city wall in China, fit to form the boundary line between two warring countries, or at least to separate states or provinces, a wall second only to the Great Wall itself. There is something romantic about a wall that climbs around and over hills, and never did a wall wander more without good reason as well as for cause. Old Jawbone, founder of the Ming dynasty, seems to have changed his mind every hundred yards about its direction, so that it meanders for almost twenty-five miles, there surrounding a new hill, taking in the spur of a mountain yonder, inclosing far more territory than any other wall of China, though the population of Nanking to-day is not great. These mountain spurs, by the way, form the dragon's paws between which Nanking is supposed to lie, and should bring it good luck, though they have not always done so.

Nanking was under martial law when I came to rejoin my family there after leaving them elsewhere two months before, but a foreigner's card was enough to get him about and his mere face sufficient to pass his baggage through the city gate outside which Hsiakwan spreads to the Yang Tze, though stern policemen went through that of even high-class Chinese. During our stay the air was full of rumors that trouble was brewing, and now and again we found police-soldiers in full equipment stationed at the gate or door of every foreign compound; but though many of the Chinese residents got their full measure of trouble later, those from the West continued to enjoy their usual immunity. The city gates are far apart and not of imposing size, so that it is often a noisy, jostling job to get inside, particularly for Chinese accompanied by their belongings. At the station or wharf horse-carriages are numerous, which is unusual even in northern China, but the traveler soon discovers why they compete with rickshaws here. There are clusters of villages within the city wall, broken by broad stretches of vegetable-gardens and foreign houses in spacious grounds—some of them owned and occupied by Chinese. The landscape inside the wall is pustulated with graves, though they lie thickly outside, and still more are being dug in the hard and stony soil. Some have before them the slim stone slab common in the south; some are in the simple Peking mound style. There is more vegetation than in Peking, eight degrees farther north, fully as many trees and much more grass, with jungle not only in and outside the city wall but upon it. There used to be wolves and deer within the walls; there still are so many "coon dogs" that the people cannot raise peanuts; pheasants, partridges, snipe, and other temptations to the minor hunter fly up from the intramural

jungle. Driving on and on, through farms, down long village streets, past hundreds of men and women working in the fields, all within the city walls, one begins at last to wonder if there is any city after all. There are said to be a thousand ponds inside Nanking, in which the inhabitants wash rice, clothes, and worse side by side. They are really fish-ponds, protected by rows of reeds stuck up in them to keep thieves from seining them out at night, since they belong to private owners, who stock them with fish—and with all manner of filth. Countless deposits of this, destined to enrich the gardens when it gets properly ripe, make the long ride inside Nanking walls an experience the nose will long remember.

But the city appears at last, four miles from the station suburb, shaken down into the southern end of the great walled inclosure like the contents of a partly filled sack, through holes in which quite sizable suburbs dribble out at the southern gates. Its colossal domain contains only about two hundred thousand more or less miserable inhabitants lost in the immensity of desolated spaces retaken by nature, amid heaps of ruins on which savage vegetation reigns untamed. Yet with the great open spaces in its northern portion, with lakes and temple-crowned hills, great drill and aviation fields, with makeshift hangars for Nanking's none too well equipped air squadron, with broad university campuses and other large establishments of missionary background, the native inhabitants crowd every inch of room down in this southern end of the great inclosure, until one might think they still hoped by huddling together to protect themselves from the lootings and massacres that punctuate the history of the city. Here space is so precious that even the bridges across the few canals carry clustered rows of houses and shops on either side, and others have grown up densely within the outer and inner sections of each city gate—where the entrance must of course be at right angles in order to outwit the hordes of evil spirits that might enter the city, but which can travel only in a straight line.

Really Nanking to-day is not so much a Chinese as a missionary city. Being in no great turmoil politically or commercially after the Taipings left it so much more spacious than populous, it was a good place for the purpose; and schools, universities, hospitals, have been founded there in great number. In addition to many regularly stationed there, hundreds of missionaries from America spend a year at the Nanking language-school, as they do in Peking if they are to serve in the north, for there are serious differences between northern and

southern mandarin speech. Of foreign houses and estates there are scores in the open northern half of the inclosure, and foreign influence is wide-spread. It is typical of Nanking to see funerals pass with a Chinese band in brilliant red uniforms playing "Tipperary" in fast time, the coffins carried on men's backs in the time-honored Chinese fashion, but the mourners behind riding in horse-carriages. When these are used for weddings or funerals the top is merely covered with red or white decorations. Yet even a Nanking funeral blocks all speed in the streets through which it passes, a riot of color and noise, but by no means a sad occasion to the coolies who earn another day's rice as corpse- or paraphernalia-bearers; and it is symbolical of the Chinese that the coffin is on the ground where it is to be buried before the digging of the grave begins. Yet foreign influence has not completely transformed Nanking; far from it. There is a receptacle for dead or unwanted babies within baseball-throw of the missionary language-school; in the crowded section far from the foreign business suburb and the orbit of mission students and workers the Caucasian who pauses in the street is likely to gather a staring crowd quickly about him.

A walk around the top of the city wall is a full day's experience even for one used to tramping, but it is a more delightful walk than on any other I know in China, for the great barrier rambles and dips and climbs, with brown meadows atop most of the way and, inside, great vistas of country dotted with Chinese and foreign houses, strewn with jungle-grown hills and heaps of ruins, and, outside, the spreading world beyond. The southern portion looks down upon the usual flat, blackish-gray sea of roofs, here and there a smoke-stack rising as high as the low city gates, with hardly a suggestion of the teeming, colorful, noisy life in the streets below, so rarely is a glimpse to be had down into them. Instead, small thick-glass sky-lights in the dark tile roofs are everywhere, perhaps giving a hint of the sunshine outside to the dwellers and workers within. For there is much weaving, especially of silk and tapestries, in Nanking, and almost all of it is done on crude looms in family house or hut, in private homes so cluttered up with them that the inhabitants often have to crawl under the looms with their reed mats and sleep on the earth floor. The over-cluttered hovels open wide on the narrow busy streets, but the publicity of their position does not bother the workers on the hand-looms any more than do their working-days of fourteen hours and more, between which they curl up on a plank with some rags or straw under their apparatus, as they squat beside it with their rice-bowls twice a day. Whether it

be mere cloth, silk, or the tapestry which constitutes a comparatively new occupation in the "southern capital," a man stands at the top of each loom and pulls a different handful of threads at each stroke of the wooden shuttle thrown by hand by the weaver. To the mere passer-by it looks a most impossible task to pull the right threads each time, but evidently it is not, thanks no doubt to some form of Chinese ingenuity, for mere boys and coolies seem to suffice for this work, and stand pulling mechanically, tireless and patient and more good-humored than a machine of the West, from dawn until dusk falls, while the more accomplished man seated below tosses his shuttle incessantly back and forth.

Dyers of cloth spread long strips of it out on the broad top of the wall to dry, and of other things of minor interest the stroller will find no end. Every third day seemed to be duck day in Nanking. Scores of coolies trotted in at the southern gates, each with two heavy baskets of quacking amphibians at the ends of his shoulder-pole. Those were tough days for the ducks also, even though they rode, for they were handled incessantly in the bargaining and the transferring, and always by the heads, in bunches of half a dozen, until their necks must have felt like those of swans or giraffes. Many were the quacking congresses of protest at such treatment, but evidently the victims were not yet united enough to do anything effective about it. Duck-flesh is as dear to the Chinese palate as pork, but nowhere in China have I seen such rows of varnished roast ducks, sometimes held in flat shape by sticks, as form the fronts of hundreds of Nanking shops.

Nanking is primarily a city of the dead, or at least of the fled. Capital of China from 317 to 582 A.D., from 1368 to 1403, again briefly after the revolution of 1911, and capable of once more becoming so, always the metropolis of art and letters, at once the Athens and the Rome of the empire, in a way the most celebrated city in China, the provincial capital of Kiangsu to-day is most conspicuous for its reminders of the past. The Taipings did most of the destruction, but there were other intestine wars and quarrels to sow their desolation and destroy many glories of the empire. Signs that attest to its great history are scattered everywhere about this once great city. The old Imperial or Manchu section within the wall, with its own gates, walls, palaces, and residences of the alien rulers of China until 1911, are mere stone-heaps, a good example of the complete destruction of a city in the old biblical sense—nothing but plowed fields and tumbled stones in place of the once proud Manchu quarter, so completely laid

waste that it suggests Sodom in its old age. The Imperial city within a city had isolated gates of huge granite blocks, and a few of these still stand because they could not easily be torn down, but nothing else is left except heaps of stone among vegetable-gardens, sometimes piled up into a beggar's or a poor man's shelter.

Relics of other rules spread far beyond the much-embracing city walls. There are old stone turtles half buried out in the woods, and no doubt many more entirely buried; time-defaced stone warriors still keep a groggy vigil before aged graves; horses, camels, and elephants, raised to life size from single blocks of granite by sculptors of long ago, old stone warriors much larger than men of flesh and blood have ever been, still line the way to the elaborate tomb, outside the east wall, of the first Ming emperor, him of the incredible face. Evidently this former bandit and conqueror of the Mongol dynasty had more than one trait in common with Cromwell, and was not ashamed of his looks, if the alleged likenesses of him scattered about China are true to life. The palaces of those early Ming rulers are in as complete ruin as those of the Manchus who followed them, but the one tomb is worth visiting, though it is nothing compared to the many Ming tombs to the northwest of Peking, to which the dynasty soon transferred its capital. One of the turtle-borne, roofed stone slabs is nearly twenty feet high, overtopping all others I have seen in China; most of the structures are sadly run down, for six centuries have slipped past since their building.

Some ancient and almost forgotten dynasty still encumbers with its monuments the soil a few miles out of Nanking. If one may judge by the puppy-dog expressions of the huge granite griffins, those kings of long ago were not without their gentle ways, even though they sacrificed living rather than paper servants, warriors, and concubines at their graves. The most striking of these is half buried under the straw-piles and rubbish of a placid wayside village. Men plow about others, probably knowing nothing about them; it is sufficient to know that they belonged to some one's dead ancestors. The gathering of what foreigners know to be disease-carrying water-chestnuts, a man or woman paddling about a filthy pond in a tub, digging the things up from the slimy bottom, is not the least common of the sights in this relic-strewn country round about Nanking.

Our stay in Nanking, as well as at the summer town of Kuling farther up the Yang Tze, was made much more worth while by the



father of a China-born American friend, who gave me bits of the distilled wisdom he had gathered during forty years as a medical missionary, most of it on the long walks we had together in both places. More observing than the average Chinese, having indeed lived longer in China than the average Chinese, he not only knew more about its history than its native residents, but spoke the language so well that even the people gasped at his command of it. One of the most amusing things in China was to drop into a temple or monastery with him and hear him quote to the priests who drank tea with us a constant string of Chinese proverbs, all very apropos, which even they could not equal. A man of that kind is a godsend to the inquisitive traveler, for, not to enter into any controversy as to the relative intelligence of the races of the East and West, the Chinese themselves do not teem with intellectual curiosity, and most of them are gullible on matters outside their daily ken, so that even if they know and wish to tell they have no strict dividing-line between the false and the true. The doctor was an inexhaustible mine of genuine information, once he could be steered past the undoubted excellence of the single tax and induced to remain in China instead of telling of the wonders of America that are to us who live there commonplace.

Perhaps the best of his stories were those that came to me from other sources and not from the modest man direct. The Chinese are artists at insulting by means of the tones of words and in other subtle ways. A favorite trick with which to ridicule a foreigner is to ask, with the most innocent face, "*Gwei hsing, Hsien-sheng?*" For unless the foreigner knows the language well he will not suspect that by a slight change in tone the inquirer has said, not, "What is the pre-born's honorable name?" but, "What is the name of the foreign devil?" This wise old missionary, beset one day by a group of smart students at a railroad station, went clear through the list of queries without giving a hint that he knew the difference between "honorable" and "devil." Then he put the students through the same mispronounced quiz, to the delight of the crowd and the consequent loss of face of the witty school-boys, ending up with the suggestion that only by becoming Christians could they attain the humility necessary to endure such scenes with equanimity.

Once when the doctor was peddling tracts against opium or cigarettes or on the virtues of Christianity or something of the sort, just as he still does at the tea-houses down in the crowded part of Nanking every Sunday morning, he was picked upon by a village wit, who

called him *yang gwei*—foreign devil. It is a simple tale, as I had it long afterward from an admiring friend of the doctor, but it is not easily told to those who know nothing of the Chinese tongue. Translation of poetry, some one has said, is like presenting the inside of a tapestry; it is much the same with jokes. Still, I shall do my humble best. When the doctor sat down for refreshments in the crowded village tea-house, the man, emboldened by the fact that his insulting epithet had called forth no comment from the victim, and thinking to cover him still further with ridicule, sat down opposite him and began in an almost obsequious voice the catechism that is common and polite on making new acquaintances in China.

"*Hsien-sheng kwei hsing?* What is the gentleman's honorable name?" This time, thanks to some more subtle plan, the "honorable" was in the proper tone.

"*Wa pi hsing Yang;* my unworthy name is Yang," humbly replied the doctor, whose real Chinese name is probably Ma.

"Ah! *Hsien-sheng yo shuma mingtze?* What might be the teacher's honorable given names?"

"My *mingtze,*" answered the doctor, with modest downcast eyes and the most innocent air, still sipping his red-hot tea in the approved Chinese sucking fashion in order to take in air enough with it not to burn off tongue and palate, "my given name is *Gwei-tze.*"

The throng in the tea-house roared its delight, and the would-be baiter of foreigners slunk off. Having said that his family name was Yang, a common one in China, the doctor had won the day by confessing to a given name which is not a common, nor even an uncommon one, for the combination "*Yang Gwei-tze*" is the Chinese term for "foreign devil," the very name the fellow had at first called him, and thought he did not understand.

It is one of the delightful things about the Chinese—and the quality most lacking in the Japanese, by the way—that they fully appreciate a joke on any one at all, though it be turned by a foreigner against one of their own people, nay, even on themselves, unless, as in this case, the joke is so strong as to make the victim seriously lose face, in which case the wisest, simplest, and commonest thing for him to do is to slink away from his fellows and stay away until they have howled all their delight out of them. To turn the laugh on your opponents is the surest way to win over a Chinese crowd, and even a smattering of their language is doubly valuable accordingly.

Another day the doctor's ready wit and Chinese learning got him out

of what might have been a tight fix. It was in the days before the Boxer uprising, if I am not mistaken, when a foreigner might much more easily have suffered at the hands of an enraged Chinese mob than to-day. Out with his tracts again, the doctor sat down in a village tea-house, dusty, sweaty, and tired, and as he was sucking his tea a surly woman, of the scrap-iron-voiced type that is no numerous and such a contrast to the almost unfailingly good-humored coolie sons and husbands—perhaps the constant ache of bound feet accounts for it—began to shriek:

“Ah, here is one of those wicked foreign devils, who dig out the eyes of Chinese babies and make medicine of them, who eat our hearts in order to get our courage, and our eyes so they can double their own sight, which can already see down into the earth as we can into water. . . .”

In pre-Boxer days millions of Chinese really believed those absurd tales, and many a foreigner died a painful death in consequence. While the woman continued to revile the tea-drinker and the growing crowd seemed to side with her, along came a man, smiling broadly, but without a nose! He shook his own hands heartily and showed every other Chinese evidence of delight at seeing the doctor, however, and when the latter gave no sign of remembering him he cried: “But you must remember me! Don’t you remember when you cut off my nose?” Then the doctor recalled; the fellow had come to his hospital in Nanking suffering from cancer of the nose; by amputating it his life had been saved. How was he now?

“Splendid; you made a new man of me,” shouted the grateful fellow, a still wider grin emphasizing his facial blemish. But meanwhile the woman had not missed her chance to confirm her charges and was shrieking louder than ever:

“There you are! There is the proof of what I have been saying. These wicked foreign devils. . . .”

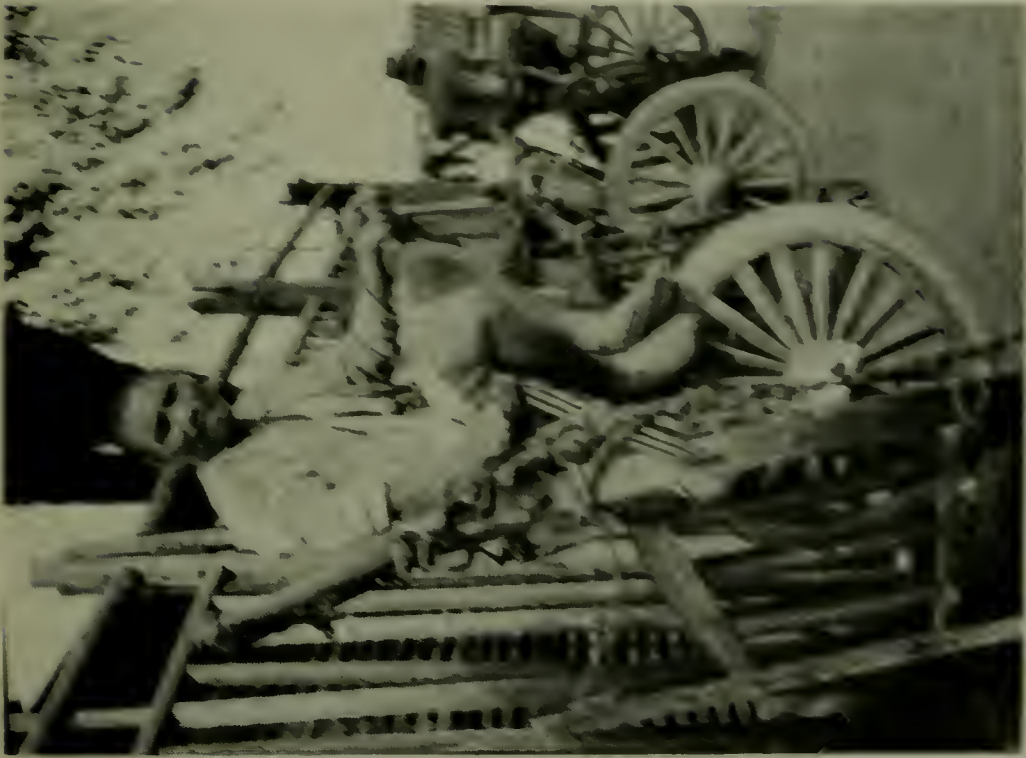
But the delight of the noseless one soon won the crowd over to the doctor’s side.

“You see,” he put in, “we do cut off noses; sometimes we even take out eyes, but it is always in order to cure some one who could not be cured otherwise. Now,” turning to the villagers who hemmed him in closely on every side, “if you people will contribute to send this woman to my hospital, I will cut out her tongue for you, and your village will be much happier for being rid of it.”

The crowd roared, of course, the woman slunk out of sight, and

the doctor was as safe in that village ever after as in his home town.

Since this missionary was more interested in mitigating the hard earthly lot of the people he spent his life among than in the doubtful task of getting them to heaven, I suspect he had something to do with the missionary committee that studied the rickshaw question in Nanking, whose report may not be without interest. The problem was especially important here where the runs are so long and competition with horse-carriages and even with automobiles keen. The committee found that the coolies who draw them paid thirty coppers per *half* day—meaning of course, a real Chinese half-day, not the four-hour loaf of our labor-unions—for the red or poorer rickshaws, and from five to fifteen coppers more for the more comfortable black ones. Their average gross income for such a half-day was eighty coppers—say twenty-two cents gold; they needed for food, clothing, straw sandals, and incidentals at least thirty coppers a day, and as much for the maintenance of the family which few indeed of them were without. But it was only on good days that the average coolie earned this; there is sickness, with the inevitable undernourishment not only for the sick man but for his dependents; there were so many licensed—a form of “graft” on the part of the authorities—that the average did not work more than half the time. A man in good condition, the committee decided, should be able to run sixteen miles a day, one mile in ten minutes; if he ran even a bit faster he used up more energy and needed higher pay. For a continuous trip his proper income would be a copper a minute; for an intermittent one, with much waiting, about half that amount. But this, they found, was 20 per cent more than even foreigners had been paying in Nanking, and of course the Chinese pay the rickshaw-men only what they must, trudging on as they bargain over their shoulders. Riders were advised to tell whether a rickshaw-man was running properly or loafing by watching the oil-valve on his hub. If this made fifty revolutions to the minute, he was running hardly a mile in eleven minutes; fifty-six meant that he was running as he should, at a good cross-country pace; sixty-two, that he was making the mile in nine minutes; seventy, should any one ever detect him in that feat, would mean a mile in eight minutes, for which he should not only be given extra money but surely, though here I am overstepping the recommendations of the committee, a leather medal as a champion of southern China; in Peking that would not be an unusual gait. I trust that future visitors to China will not



The scenery of the lower Yangtze was more beautiful than I had found elsewhere. It was a beautiful sight to see the people of the lower Yangtze carrying their goods on their backs.



Good example of a good woman, water right to the road, making a little for edible elements of long roads a little less uncomfortable.



Among the many Chinese ways of fishing is the constant drifting to the bottom of a seissors-net while a pair of reber rows the man in the slow boat.



The diligent, but seldom well-rewarded, fishermen of China's streams, ponds, and mud flats often sustain themselves with the simplest forms of food and medicine.

take all this so seriously to heart as to confine their sight-seeing to mere oil-valve revolutions, for with foreign visitors the rickshaw-man who cannot keep his pace down and his fee up to at least the standard deserves to run or starve himself to death.

From Nanking no railways strike inland, but the Yang Tze does, dropping rapidly down the latitudes, so that even he who is bent on seeing southern China may strike southwestward on the great river. The available craft are of every conceivable degree of comfort and of lack thereof, from luxurious foreign steamers as home-like as an ocean liner to greasy little native launches and wind-teased junks. It is, of course, far more tourist-like to visit only those few treaty-ports in the six hundred miles from Shanghai to Hankow which the foreign steamers consider worthy of their attention; but he who wishes to see the Yang Tze region more than merely as the distant shore of a passing country, with now and then an unscheduled stop at a sand-bar, must endure native launches and perhaps even more comfortless water-borne contrivances. A mightier contrast than a sudden drop from a floating palace of the Yang Tze to one of the dirty little *hwatse*, only home of a probably large and certainly filthy family, to which the traveler to the smaller ports is subjected, would take much seeking. Nor are the smells and noises of a native launch, every inch of its deck-space crowded with native passengers or cargo, always delectable, though I for one do not find the chatter of Chinese coolies any more meaningless than that heard in Pullman smoking-rooms, while the unfailing cheerfulness of such a gathering, with never a comfort and no outlook for the future, should be a needed example to almost any one from the opulent West.

In a sense the foreigner is unfairly treated by his own people on the Yang Tze, for with the exception of the Japanese boats the steamers will not permit white men to go even "first-class Chinese," which means state-rooms with hard wooden bunks and Chinese food. Here the fare is very much less, and many is the missionary, to say nothing of the mere wanderer, who patronizes the sun-flag for the saving, to the scorn of the business men with rich profits on an unlimited expense account. In fact even Chinese servants resent this, for the rake-off from gambling and opium-smoking is nil among foreign passengers, and the Chinese in their own first class give five-dollar tips where such white men as travel there give one.

The journey up the lower Yang Tze is not exciting,—flat banks

covered with high reeds far off on either side, now and then low hills across the paddy-field country; the coolies packed together in third class like sardines are more interesting. Now and again we pass a case of poor judgment, such as the best Japanese boat on the river, which tried to shorten its journey one night by cutting across a jutting rice-field, and was still there when the high water of the following spring came around. The junks of the Yang Tze are without number, as are the patches that make up the sails of many of them, stayed across with bamboos at short intervals, women and children helping the men to mend those spread out along the banks. Many of the junks are made of logs of the size of telegraph-poles, often the largest wood to be had in tree-hungry China, and the rounded outer surfaces, duly calked, pitched, and varnished, suggest clapboard houses. Anything that will float makes a boat on the Yang Tze; tubs filled with nests of rags serve not merely as floating cradles but hold whole families of beggars; others in dirty wrecks of boats come shivering out to beg the slops of steamers or even of native launches, meanwhile picking up every floating thing, from a sliver of wood to a rotting cabbage-stump, and somehow managing to keep soul and body together, though it is hard to see why they wish to do so. Here and there a big sturdy coolie on a passing junk sits combing out his magnificent shining-black tresses with a wooden comb and ladylike motions; once we passed two boats in the middle of the mile-wide river, and in each was a man with a long pole ending in a lash, who was whipping along a great flock of ducks, evidently driving them from shore to shore.

The Yang Tze and its side-waters of all sizes are dotted with fish-nets raised and lowered by a kind of hand-over-hand rope-ladder from little thatch huts on shore or floating at the other end of a raft; there is also the scissors-net, the toss-net—rarest of all, the hook and line, though even that is not unknown. One seldom sees these fishermen of China bring up anything worth catching, yet evidently enormous quantities of fish are taken from that vast muddy placid stream every day, century after century, just as they are all over China from myriad mud-holes in which no Western fish could live. It certainly is a case similar to the miracle of the loaves and fishes, tempering the wind to the shorn lamb, or something equally moralistic, that the waters of China seem never to be fished out but are always capable of supplying a few more fish in reward for infinite patience, and keep many a population from complete starvation. In places along the Yang Tze the rewards of diligent endeavor are so great that there remain fish to split open and dry in the sun after the hunger of the day has been stunted.



Beyond Wuhu, a treaty-port flaunting the modern buildings of a score of foreign companies, is Tatung, less foreignized and more picturesque, partly on an island across which a road has lately been built to the hulks. A few old rickshaws with iron tires, true bone-shakers, have followed; and the inexperienced pullers—experience is as necessary in rickshaw-pulling as in banking—have the audacity to solicit your patronage. Heed not, for if you succumb to their blandishments you will remember perhaps to your grave that the “paving” of Tatung is entirely of cobbles or flagstones worn to corduroy centuries ago. Fortunately fate or my hardy ancestors provided me with a moderately efficient pair of legs, however remiss they may have been in other respects, so that a town must be larger than any between Nanking and Hankow before I need to be pulled or carried about it.

It was on those same legs, too, that I depended for my pilgrimage to sacred Chio-hwa-shan, from which it is easier to return to Tatung than to set out from it. So one afternoon I landed from a native launch at Tzuchowfu, with a missionary beginning a month's itinerary. As a town Tzuchowfu is nothing to cable home about, though it might be if as much had been spent on its miserable streets and pig- and chicken-infested mud houses as must have been on the dozen or more richly carved memorial arches of marble or similar stone which straddle its narrow streets so closely one after another that two are almost within reach at once. Costly and artistic stone *p'ai-lou* amid dejected mud villages seemed to be particularly prevalent in this part of China. We ate the Chinese meal provided by the faithful of the town, slept on our cots in one of the two mud rooms of the “chapel,” and at dawn I was off with a stout coolie of unusual size who had agreed not only to carry my load but to keep up with me as well, though at an exorbitant number of coppers and a specified tip, for somehow the false notion had reached that part of China that I walk at an immoderate pace.

We planned to break the average record and to make the top of the sacred mountain in a single day. To be exact, there are several mountains, for Chio-hwa-shan takes its name of Nine Flowery Mountains from the striking cluster of jagged peaks—outdoing even the saw-toothed range behind Lecco in Italy—among which the clump of monasteries is situated. These showed up on the horizon soon after we left the shores of the Yang Tze, and grew in beauty all day, a beauty far outstripping bare and almost isolated Taishan, in the Shantung of Confucius, though to China as a whole that is perhaps the most sacred of all mountains. The long ridge forming the main

range presented a row of fantastic peaks that looked on the far horizon as if they were a glass screen capriciously shattered across the top. Many foot-hills formed the vanguard and there were many lower ranges in the distance.

Sacred places must of course be more or less inaccessible to have any great sanctity; the top of a high mountain, or a distant island like Pootoo, is preferable. For not only do the priests and monks need secluded spots in which best to meditate and develop their hocus-pocus, but it would never do to have one of the chief holy places of China within easy reach on the banks of the Yang Tze; for one thing the coolies who come in hordes on pilgrimage would not be induced to spend enough, and there would be plenty of competition and no form of monopoly. For more than half a day we plodded across an almost dead-flat plain by the blistering flagstone roads of southern China, always winding incessantly, not only to follow the dikes between the rice-fields but on every possible, and many impossible, excuses. It was November, and autumn colors recalling October in Connecticut decorated the landscape. Wooden posts topped by red Chinese lanterns that might have been copied from an incoherent description of the gas-lamps in backward American suburbs lined the way closely, the pious furnishing candles to burn inside them. It was the pilgrim season, as was so often my good luck when I made pilgrimage to the holy places of China. Pilgrims in long files, whole trains of pilgrims, sometimes broken, more often as exact for long distances as marching soldiers, wound like endless snakes along the narrow stone trail. Earliest of all the sights of the day had been several women howling across the country toward the sunrise, calling back the soul of some recently deceased male relative. Though there were a few mountain-chairs, consisting of little more than two bamboo poles with crosspieces for seat and feet, fat contented-looking monks riding in most of them, the more common conveyance in this region is a huge shallow basket, on similar poles and serving the same purpose, the passenger sitting or stretching out in them as he chooses. But that is not the reason for them. In pre-republican days no son of a chair-coolie could take the government examinations for a degree; and it is typical of Chinese character that by this simple ruse they got around the prohibition and keep it up long after the reason has disappeared. Some of these basket-chairs are used for invalids who hope that a pilgrimage to the sacred mountains will cure them, and some by the beggars, who put their most appalling and appealing members in them, so that now

and then one saw carried past a basketful of the most horrible human misery.

In the afternoon we began to mount along the crest of a great ridge, and the still flagstoned way was lined now by long rows of straw huts little better than dog-kennels, in which live hundreds of mendicants. Rice and some tea grew on terraces just off the trail; the scenery under the changing shades of the setting sun was as delightful as the human beings who disfigured it were not. Along the ridge trailed a broken line of pilgrims, flanked close on either side by constantly importuning beggars, some of them complete physical wrecks, some showing atrocious sores—artistic frauds in some cases no doubt—some as sturdy and as able to work as the pilgrims who dropped a “cash” each into the shallow basket of well and ailing alike before attacking the last and stiffest stage of the climb. Great crowds of begging ruffians, many of them so hale and hearty that they could easily have robbed me, the only foreigner for many miles about, but who on the contrary were very friendly, above all cheerful, were not so smiling toward the Chinese who did not fee them. Some were so wealthy that they had strings of “cash,” strung on straws, with which to short-change a meager livelihood; most of them were gambling away their day’s beggings, mainly in perforated brass “cash,” and eating whatever supper fate had awarded them. The general health was not so good, however, as along the stairway to Taishan in the cooler north, and there were many splendid examples of *mao-ping*, the scalp-disease so wide-spread in China, more prevalent in the south, often leaving the victim, usually a child, with hardly a hair on the whole expanse of whitish scabs covering the skull. Some of these feeders-on-pilgrims lining the moderate climb to Chio-hwa-shan managed to keep rice in their bellies by owning a little private god of stone or mud to which, they successfully assured many of the simple pilgrims, the climbers must make offering or get no luck from their long, expensive pilgrimage. At almost every temple or monastery through the passageway to which the trail had cleverly been run stood a priest or a monk beating a bell or gong before some larger, uglier idol to scare the naïve passers-by into digging down again into the bright yellow apron-bags, like a carpenter’s or a newsboy’s sack, adorned with two or three Chinese characters, in which they carried their “cash.” Each pilgrim band was headed with banners, flutes, and a kind of drum; some carried lighted paper lanterns with characters on them, and bowed down, hands clasped together, before each undusted

god; now and again a pair paused to burn incense to their ancestors at a hastily improvised shrine at which they prostrated themselves several times before going on. But most of them tossed their brass offerings to the gods no more reverently than they did to the beggars.

Beyond Tien Men, one of the many Chinese "gates of heaven," which consisted partly of a temple through which the road led, began an unbroken stone stairway, hours high, the stone steps lost at either end in jungle, clumps of bamboo in the pockets of the mountain that towered behind. There was much vegetation along the narrow stream which we were following, and which, far down below, spread out into a little river with water enough to carry small poled cargo-boats up to the foot of the sacred mountains. We climbed on into the dusk, the red sun sinking behind the fantastic panorama of peaks now close at hand, through trees and huge rocks, almost entirely alone now, for there were no beggars here, at least so late in the day, and the great mass of pilgrims plan to get only to the temple at the foot of the mountains on the first day. As the day was dying I met one belated coolie carrying four cans of American kerosene, that is, twenty gallons, up this mighty climb to the temple village at the top. Try it on your own shoulders! It is a real day's climb from the banks of the Yang Tze to the monastery town among the most sacred mountains in central China, yet my sturdy coolie arrived under my bed and baggage not far behind me.

In the morning I set out to climb about the place, for the climbing is by no means ended merely by getting into the central square of the monastery town, with its shops and street-booth venders of all manner of things appealing to simple pilgrims; cheap carved wooden trinkets of no real use, except as souvenirs or perhaps as children's toys, are most in demand. In the temples crowds of pilgrims were adding their masses of incense and paper "cash" and false silver and gold ingots to the huge iron urns already overflowing with the ashes of similar offerings, paying the contented, supercilious-looking priests to write them paper prayers, to interpret the omen on that one of the bamboo sticks in bamboo tubes first shaken out of the mass, or the augury of the wooden thing of queer shape which the inquirer tosses into the air, the side falling uppermost indicating his fortune. Some of the monasteries of Chio-hwa-shan are pitched like medieval castles on half-inaccessible mountain ridges and peaks, where the monks in the midst of their forest vistas and splendid solitude, with tons of wood piled up ready for the coming winter, seemed to resent the intrusion of a foreigner—as why should n't they? Looking down from these lofty

places upon the principal square of the village one saw mice-sized men surging about minute gaily colored patches that one knew to be displays of useless trinkets, and a great stretch of hill-pitched temples climbing away in many directions, with such a view out across the jagged ranges into the world below as alone made the trip worth while.

It is naturally a shorter journey down from Chio-hwa-shan to the Yang Tze than up, but, if anything, more tiring to the legs, and lacking the incentive and inspiration of the climb. Some time perhaps nature will so arrange things that no one will ever have to double back on his course; but the beautiful reds and other colors of autumn were still there, and merely by way of providing a spring or fall excursion for hard-worked coolies and peasants, to take their minds off their work, if that is any advantage to so leisurely and uncomplaining a race, these places of pilgrimage seemed justified.

Most foreign travelers on the lower Yang Tze, though they may catch a glimpse of Anking if their steamer happens to pass it in the daytime, hardly land there, for which they are to be congratulated. For it is not a treaty-port, and the big boats make only a brief halt, and hardly that, out in midstream, while sculled shore-boats fight out to them through the swift current, all but upsetting the throngs and the miscellaneous baggage with which they are overloaded, toss these into the dirty lower deck of the steamer, grab an identical mob of descending travelers, and are fighting their way back to shore almost before the passenger who has dropped his bundle overboard in the chaotic, shrieking excitement realizes that it is gone forever.

The political capital of Anhwei Province still retains its importance on the map, but Pengpu has usurped much of its power. It seems almost a town in miniature, surely the least of the eighteen provincial capitals of China, claiming a hundred thousand people; but what is that in the crowded, swarming way of Chinese living? From the Yang Tze on which it faces, or rather backs, in the age-honored Chinese fashion, it is noticeable chiefly for its famous pagoda, now newly renovated and in its brightest plumage. The circuit of its wall will not take more than an hour or so, even though there are many vacant grassy spaces within it and large portions are taken up by various missionary institutions. Grave-mounds without number make the hilly earth outside look like the reverse side of a region battered with shell-holes, or of a pock-marked face; and among these the pigs root. Over them and over the confined corpses that sit outdoors everywhere,

some covered with weather-ruined mats or tiny mud houses, a few cemented or plastered over into real whited sepulchers, the dyers of blue and black cloth spread their long narrow strips. These occupied coffins, isolated or in low uneven rows inside as well as outside the wall, are there because the survivors of the remains within them are still without sufficient funds to pay the geomancers their price for picking a lucky burial spot, or because the phases of the moon are not yet right for a lucky burial day, or perhaps merely because filial piety is on the wane in the Anhwei capital. Thus the man who has a feeling against being laid away in the cold dark ground can be left sitting out on the hillsides, with the landscape he may have loved in life about him, as if on a perpetual picnic, listening to the gossip of the weavers, who now and then, with no sense of disrespect, being Chinese, use his coffin as a seat, smelling now and then the breath of a grazing water-buffalo, hearing the laughter of children at their games—of boys, that is, and perhaps sympathizing a bit, from the vantage-point of the wiser after-world, with the girls whose bound feet pain them so much that they can only look on. But the boards are sometimes too thin, thanks to the poverty or the stinginess of survivors, and the dogs may feed upon him.

Of the wisdom of leaving their dead lying unburied about them, the people of Anking think no more than of their other forms of uncleanliness. The whole city drinks from the Yang Tze, which is a yellow river also, quite as much as its northern rival the Hoang Ho, and coolies with two buckets of it swinging from their shoulders make constant jogging, jostling procession up through the river-gates, slopping the streets into slimy, slippery, filthy canals, and sousing, from the knees down, any unwary pedestrian. But that happens in nearly every city of China; what makes the uncleanliness of Anking striking is that almost every one seems to live with pigs, chickens, ducks, and innumerable curs of scavenger habits. Fungus-weeds cover most of the house-roofs, giving them a mottled appearance a bit unlike the bluish gray common to the vista inside the walls of most Chinese cities; rubbish and worse lie open to prowling dogs even along the top of the city wall. But all this seems to worry the Ankingese not at all, any more than it does the great mass of people throughout the once miscalled Celestial Empire. In place of introducing some hint of sanitation they paint the huge character "Fu," meaning happiness, in places where it will strike the eye as they go out of doors, much as we hang the sign "Smile" in our business



The victim may like it, but foreigners squirm when the outdoor Chinese barber digs out the ears and scrapes the eyes of his clients



Even the principal streets of Yangchow have not appreciably widened since the days of Governor Marco Polo



Beggars' huts line the climb to sacred Chio-Hwa-Shan. A scalp-disease wide-spread in China has left the boy on the right with a great white scab in place of hair



Some of the monasteries at "Nine Flowery Mountains" are pitched like medieval castles on hardly accessible peaks and ridges



offices. The Chinese might seem to need oftener to be reminded that they are happy than we that we have just cause for smiling, but such does not seem to be the case. The racial cheerfulness is as much in evidence in Anking as elsewhere, and perhaps it is because theirs is no treaty-port that they show less gruffness than other Yang Tze cities to the foreigner wandering among them.

Another substitute for cleanliness is the rebuilding of the pagoda. According to one of the many bursts of the rampant Chinese imagination, Anking is a boat anchored in the Yang Tze with two anchors, one the pagoda and the other its shadow thrown at sunrise across the river, from which roll up the Anhwei mountains that stand out blue in the northern distance. A moneyed Chinese had a dream and did not take passage, as he had planned, on a certain boat, which was fired upon and sunk; and in gratitude he had the pagoda restored—almost rebuilt, in fact, for, important as it is for a town that is a boat to be anchored, the people of Anking had grown careless in the matter. Perhaps they secretly hoped that they might float away some night to something at least better than this.

Though they are not particularly rare in China, it was at Anking, after a year and a half in the country, that I came upon my first case of reputedly genuine preserved monk. It is not at all uncommon in that strange land to put the corpse of a deceased holy man in a *k'ang*, a big earthenware jar, fill the rest with willow charcoal, and leave him three or four years, and if he comes out well—that is, sweet to the nostrils, in so far as those of China function—to gild him over and set him up as an idol in the attitude of the meditating Buddha, to the awe of the pious and the material benefit of the surviving monks. But here was a man who had let himself be walled up alive within a cell, with just space enough to be seen and to have his food passed to him, and who looked fat and contented, though he had already been there for years and would remain until he attained Nirvana and idolhood.

The speech of Anking is so nearly that of Peking that the children even shout "*Ee mao ch'ien!* (one dime money!)" from the foot of the dilapidated wall at the foreigner taking the only half-agreeable stroll in town. There is a Mohammedan mosque, and a widows' retreat run by the Chinese themselves that is reputed one of the few worthy examples of native charity in China. Excitement had not died down over an incident that for once showed some real life in the "student movement" from which those little acquainted with China hope so much. The students of Anking had "beaten up," and wrecked the

houses of, the provincial representatives, legally long since out of office, who had accepted the fixed fee, reputed to be \$10,000 "Mex" a vote, awarded those who voted Tsao Kun into the presidency at Peking. In the impossible event of our own national representatives' accepting money or "other material consideration" for their votes, can you imagine our students so lacking in the finer susceptibilities of our higher civilization as to "beat up" a returned congressman? God forbid! Also Lord preserve us from becoming like unto the lowly and heathen Chinese!

The waterfront of Kiukiang, another stride up the Son of the Sea, taking no lesson from the shaded and well-paved Bund that has made the part of it given over to foreigners a cool and pleasant promenade, is built sheer down to the water's edge, like almost all river cities of China, petering out at either end in garbage-piles and noisome hovels. Perhaps the chief difference between Kiukiang and Anking is in their respective attitudes toward foreigners, another confirmation of the impression that at least the outward respect of the Chinese for the Occidental decreases in inverse ratio to their familiarity with him. This chief port of Kiangsi Province has also often been cited for at least honorable mention among the filthiest of Chinese cities, but it has an unfair advantage in the matter of publicity and propaganda, for not only is it a treaty-port, with numerous foreign establishments along its shaded Bund, but it is the disembarking-place for those thousands of Westerners who make Kuling up in the hills behind it the largest foreign summer-resort in China. As we are to spend the summer up there, however, let us have done, while its temperature is still endurable, with the lower Yang Tze before abandoning the great river we are not to see again until far up where it is still dizzy with its mad tumble down from the mountains of Tibet.

It would be quite improper, of course, to pass by that great human hive, the triplet cities at the mouth of the Han, where the lower and the upper Yang Tze are commonly considered to join. Not that there is much out of the ordinary there for any one familiar with China as a whole, but the hundreds of residents of the most inland foreign concession in China would accuse any one who failed to visit them of leaving out the most important part of the country.

I came into Hankow from two directions, at periods of more than a year apart. The first time, by rail from the north and with Peking still in mind, the place struck me as nothing strange; it was almost a

shock to my system when I came down from western China a year later. Then it was more than four months since I had seen an automobile; bobbed hair was a memory of Hottentots, wide, well-paved streets a dim recollection, a starched collar an inanity. To be dumped suddenly in a bustling city wholly Western in its architecture and layout, even though completely surrounded by China, among buildings looming high into the air, with several theaters, even though they offered only American "movies," with automobiles dashing their imperious way up and down the river-front Bund and out the parallel streets, with even an American garage, its keeper true to life in his rating of the relative merits of self-confidence and proficiency, was in a mild way like coming back from the grave. Tea and tennis, golf and swimming, baseball and its octogenarian relative, cricket, curling for the Scotties, bridge for the ladies, games for the "kiddies," what pastime from horse-racing to cocktails is denied the blasé and perhaps a bit overdressed ladies and gentlemen who gather ever more thickly from the cooler end of the afternoon onward in the band-enlivened precincts of the Hankow Country Club, admittedly the "greatest club in China" without such frequent mention of the fact? Comfort is all very well, one catches oneself musing, but do not we Americans, and in their own queer way even the English, make a fetish of it? For all the plethora of recreations at their command, these spotlessly groomed fellows in their snug little oasis of full civilization looked discontented, were visibly in poorer physical condition, perhaps in morale also, than I, just out of months of hard going in what they would have called the "uncivilized" interior. Possibly I was wrong in my impression that they would have been better off for more stairs to climb, harder beds to sleep on, and now and then the opportunity of making these up themselves. Elevators—locally known as "lifts" even among once self-respecting Americans—carry them to garden-lawns on the tops of ten-story buildings, with views out across the concession into the Chinese cities that surround it, but into which they rarely go; yet as their eyes drift off down the broad, ocean-steamer-going Yang Tze they seem to have no inkling how like prisoners in an enchanted castle they are. Their servants may know something of foreigners and their ways, but it is little less than ludicrous how completely ignorant of the Chinese about him is many an old resident of Hankow. Those who have never left Western shores and "know" the Chinese mainly as he is depicted in popular novels and on our screens and stage are often no more full of prejudices about him. But

he must at all cost be kept at a distance. Sometimes it is hard to imply exactly the caste line one wishes to draw; the elevators of Hankow avoid offensive directness by displaying a placard, "All persons in servants' or coolie clothing are forbidden to use the lift." Nicely done; well-dressed Chinese have little occasion to enter where they are never invited; the servants and the delivery men can climb ten stories, for they are used to hard work; just what a white man released by bandits in their cast-off clothing would do is of course verging into that childishness we often vainly try to cover up.

Yet the resident of Hankow has only to walk a bit down the narrow, jostling street which continues the broad, orderly Bund of the concession, pay a copper to cross on one of many ancient sculled-boat ferries that very crowded waterway that brings so much down from the interior and gives Hankow at its mouth its name, and look out from the hill beyond, to see what a little, really insignificant oasis in this vast China is the Hankow of the foreigners. The temple on the hilltop, breathing the smoke from the high chimneys of the iron-mills that have become Japanese partly because the Chinese owners did not keep up payments on the loan with which they were built, is filled with soldiers who have orders not to let strangers in; but they seem to come from somewhere inland, so that the foreigner has no great difficulty in distracting their attention until he has what he came for. The walled city of Hanyang, much older than its now world-widely known neighbor, with its big lotus-ponds, its boats to and from the Han, often propelled by women, its familiar vista of dull, flat house-tops, lies some distance away along a one-row town that continues between the river and the city wall to the lumber-yards far beyond, so that from aloft the city itself looks like a large knot in a long string. Across the Yang Tze—but if only we will return to Hankow, six coppers will take us there on a steam-launch, and by climbing the long rocky ridge like the protruding backbone of the dragon that it is admitted to be by the otherwise dead-flat city that it cuts into two almost equal parts, we shall have a far better glimpse of Wuchang.

Better still is the view of all three cities from the top of the pagoda beyond, with the rivers, even some lakes, and all the populous district about them, the railway northward to Peking, and, on this southern side of Yang Tze, the dawdling one that starts in vain for Canton. But Wuchang, chief among the many claimants for the honor of starting the revolution against the Manchus, should be more interesting, more romantic. Perhaps it is too near Hankow, so that

the foreign devices it has adopted or adapted in place of the old Chinese ways have left it a trifle colorless. Politically of course the Hupeh capital is important, half-way commander of the Yang Tze, and in almost the geographic center of the country; but even the yamen where Li Yuan-hung, lately so cavalierly kicked out of his second term as president of China, was a general of the Manchus before he became the revolutionary leader of Hupeh Province, has been so restored that it is baldly commonplace. The city wall is a jungle along which it is all but impossible to make one's way, an unusual thing in China, and seeming to suggest that there must be work for all among the triplet cities at the mouth of the Han, for otherwise merely the beggars sleeping on it would smooth it down. Then there is Chop-stick Street,—whole lumber-yards of bamboo cut in chop-stick lengths, men and boys sitting on the ground in little, shallow, frontless shops splitting and painting them by rubbing them in great masses on platforms oozing with red paint, and finally dipping one end in green, so that the hands of the workers all the way to the elbows, and wherever they have touched their faces during the past few days, are of the same colors. The Chinese, by the way, never use a paint-brush even in painting a house, but dip a rag, hand and all, into the stuff and smear it over the surface. There seem to be chop-sticks enough here for all China, but of course the four hundred million wear out many in a year. They are tied up in small bundles, then into larger one, and carried away in great shoulder-pole loads. The better *baguettes* made here are finished in yellow; the more aristocratic ones of bone, sometimes even of real ivory for Chinese elegants, are fashioned elsewhere.

Legend has several explanations for this queer implement for the handling of food. "Under Tsin Shu Hwang, the first emperor," runs one tale, "the people were not allowed to have in their possession any weapons, not even iron knives for cooking and eating." What a beligerent people the now pacific sons of Han must have been in those days! Perhaps that "first emperor" does mark a break with the past, for it was he, unless I have misread my lesson, who established a large standing army and destroyed all historical and classical books except those on agriculture and medicine, so that all past history might be forgotten and he himself considered the beginning of all things. May we not some day hope for a constitutional amendment to the same effect in our own dear land? This, or the gist of another of the several legends, may be the real origin of the chop-stick, but the chances are that it is simply that point in man's evolution up from our ancestor the

savage, who even in the Western world ate with his fingers to a late date, at which the Chinese, richer in bamboo than in iron, stopped, as they have in so many of their advances toward complete civilization.

## CHAPTER IV

### FLAGSTONE TRAILS IN AUGUST

**I**N prehistoric times, so to speak, before the Boxer uprising and the invention of the automobile, a youthful British missionary, who is still living, incredible as it may appear, to profit by his foresight, took a short cut through the Lushan Range behind Kiukiang and came back to his station fired with a new enthusiasm. High up in the hollows of the loftiest peaks of this isolated group, standing out from the Yang Tze like a toy-theater range of blue cardboard set up against the southern horizon, he had found the very place for a summer refuge from the steaming plains on which the unpleasantly white faces of missionary wives and children showed it was not well for them to be confined the year round. To cut very short a very long story, the myriad obstacles put in their way by the Manchus, local officials, priests, and monks of the ancient establishments scattered among these semi-sacred mountains, and by the superstitious people who made pilgrimage to them, were at last overcome, and the outside barbarians were ceded a strip of land along a rock-tumbling stream from which grassy wooded slopes rise swiftly on either side. In the more than a quarter of a century that has passed since then, Kuling has grown to a great foreign community, the permanent home of no small number of foreign families so acclimated to China that they can never again breathe freely in the lands of their origin, and of a great congregation of Westerners during the four months of a torrid Yang Tze summer.

For those who like walking it is a splendid climb from the foot of the Lushan Range where, half an hour back of Kiukiang, foreign-subsidized automobiles drop thousands of our race between June and September. The great majority of those who mount to Kuling, however, are not tireless pedestrians, and almost any day in the season finds a score or more of Caucasians being carried aloft by prosperity-spoiled coolies up the great stone stairway framed in jungle that takes advantage of one of the gorges down which the waters that fall copiously on Lushan tumble headlong to the plain below. To-day there

is approximately one foreign resident of summer-time Kuling for each of the 3500 feet above sea-level of the "Gap," through the native markets of which the chair-riders are borne at last and jogged away to substantial dwellings in the steep wooded valley. Business houses of Shanghai and Hankow maintain large bungalows where their wearied staffs take turns in recuperating; French, Italians, Spaniards, Norwegians, and even Germans mingle in the cosmopolitan community; there are so many Russians, who have made their fortune, however modest, in China or escaped from their native land with enough to live on in at least simple comfort, that a whole section of Kuling is known as "Russian Valley"; it would probably be difficult to find a country in Europe or a foreign enterprise in China that is not represented. But the missionaries, Americans now outstripping the British, overwhelmingly predominate and give the place its atmosphere. For one thing, the saving of souls is a less continuous, pressing business than the gathering of dollars. Even mission schools have their vacations; proselyting perhaps does not thrive when fans are indispensable; missionaries far and wide send their families, and come themselves as often and for as long as the salvation of their flocks—technical language for such things as correcting examination papers, making out new curricula, restocking hospital shelves, overseeing Chinese pastors, and the like—permits; Kuling is the scene of numberless "conferences" of all the Protestant sects that are afflicting China with their minor differences.

If the influx of Chinese promises to be the ruination of Kuling, the foreigners have themselves to blame. Having learned from bitter experience that concessions granted to Westerners become places of refuge for malefactors of their own race, the Celestials themselves insisted on a clause in the document ceding Kuling that forbids Chinese owning or renting land there. But servants of course are indispensable. Shopkeepers from the Gap can scarcely be refused the right to pass the wooden barrier that separates their domain from the ceded territory, except when it is closed at night. Then the missionaries bring together swarms of Chinese students and teachers; they hope to save some erring soul during the summer in surroundings that they feel can really influence it; many of them are so naturally Sinophile that, perhaps without even realizing it, they are unhappy unless Chinese are swarming about them. I am not on the side of those foreign residents of China who would always hold the Chinese off at arm's length. But if there is one thing the average Caucasian living in China needs it is



an occasional respite from the Chinese, a chance to breathe his own atmosphere again, without the necessity, for a space, of adjusting his intellectual faculties to those of the Orient, a place where he may be as nearly home in his native land as is possible without actually making the long voyage necessary to that pleasure. After such a respite he goes back to his work, whatever it may be, with a renewed zest and an increased ability to endure for another season with something like a fitting humor the annoyances of the Chinese, excellent people though they are in many particulars. But the zeal, not to say the soft-heartedness, of the missionaries in a sense works their undoing. To cap the climax the local council, in its commendable eagerness for income, has issued licenses to every brand and species of peddler who is to be found in that part of China, or who can by hook or crook get there, to prey upon every foreigner in the place and make his porch a sample-room and a daily shrieking emporium, unless he so far lacks the missionary spirit as to throw a chair at the heads of the first score or so of prowling venders seeking to 'foist upon him their more or less spurious and always unneeded wares. Thus Kuling is not the quiet, restful, home-like haven in a Chinese land that it might so easily have been, and the graveled roads and shaded benches which the foreigners built for themselves are overrun with another race.

The forest-embowered houses that climb the steep slopes on either side of the main stream and flow ever farther down other valleys are at worst a great improvement upon life in the howling heart of a Chinese city. Lilies twice as high as the second generation bloomed in our untended garden; thickly verdant trees all but hide the stone houses—lacking none of the comforts of home, pitying contributor to mission funds!—scattered by hundreds among the hills; enticing trails coax the tramper off into rugged and delightful corners of the rocky range. From a dozen vantage-points one can look down upon the Yang Tze and its green plain thousands of feet below, the great milk-and-coffee-colored river winding its placid way across the mighty rice-field carpet, only here and there in the dim distance broken by an isolated clump of hills. In the summer season it is almost sure to have overflowed its banks, and vast patches of somewhat clearer water shade away over areas which in places curve on over the hazy, semi-tropical horizon. Kiukiang on the nearer edge of the picture is like a cluster of swallow-nests irregularly pasted against the edge of the yellow flowing road, specked here and there with a tiny steamer that seems almost motionless, and with the apparently quite static sails of

junks. If one chances to have picked a point where the stair-like roadway by which he came from the world below can be seen, an endless train of ascending carriers, here a pair toiling upward with a trunk, there a quartet with a barrel of cement dangling between them from their shoulders, everywhere weak-legged travelers in chairs carried by four and even six coolies in place of the two or three who trot away with any human load in less foreignized parts of China, crawls upward like a procession of jungle ants. The tail of the train emerges incessantly from the vegetation cutting off the mountain-foot sheer below, the head crawls constantly on into the huddled market-town of the Gap, seething by day with coolies bearing everything required by a large cosmopolitan colony widely separated from its natural sources of supply. From somewhere near at hand, or more faintly across the valleys, is sure to sound the "Hay haw! Hah haw!" with which the burden-bearing coolies of all the Yang Tze Valley singsong themselves into rhythmic step under cumbersome loads—here chiefly building-stones carved out of the hills, for the granite supply of Kuling is as convenient and unlimited as that of Rio de Janeiro.

At other times, day after day, sometimes week after week, tropical rains pour down upon Lushan, at least once almost every year with force enough to tear away bridges and stoned embankments laboriously constructed, flooding a house here and there—such as the one we occupied—with several inches of yellow water that, racing down the front steps in foamy cataracts, leaves a residue that calls for shovels, overthrowing great trees and embittering the souls of those with hanging gardens. In North China, where rain is rare, it is a terror to the Chinese; your power of command will be genuine if you can force your coolies a mile along the trail in the mildest shower. In the China of the Yang Tze and southward, however, where weeks of downpour are a yearly detail of life, the dread of a wetting is much less keen. Before the mists of the latest deluge began to leave Kuling visible again even to itself, the sounds of blasting, the dulled blows of a hundred stone-cutters, and the "Hay haw! Hah haw!" of the stone-carriers is rising once more in that landscape chorus of almost musical sound that floated all summer over Kuling—six days a week. For the missionary influence is so powerful that daring indeed would be the pair or quartet so impious as even to spend a Sunday morning on the tennis-courts.

Kuling is the only place I have ever had the pleasure of inhabiting in which anarchy legally reigns. The territory having been ceded in

perpetuity to foreigners, most of them with extraterritorial rights, the Chinese have no more authority in it than in the concessions of Shanghai or Hankow. No foreign power has assumed jurisdiction over it. There is an elected council, made up entirely of missionaries, unless I am misinformed, yet not without wide differences of opinion for all that, as a brief attendance at a council meeting will demonstrate. This body gets much done toward the growth and improvement of Kuling; it maintains a police force of Chinese who can arrest or expel from the settlement those of their own race. The foreigner who does not choose to obey the mandates of the council cannot be coerced into doing so by anything stronger than public opinion. An appreciable number of older residents steadily refuse to pay taxes, mainly on the ground that they disapprove the uses to which the community funds are put, and there is nothing for the amateur governing body to do but to suppress any unchristian comments and forego that portion of the annual revenue. If I had succumbed to a frequent impulse and gone out and killed a persistent peddler, or even shot a neighbor of my own race for overworking a phonograph that should have long ago been consigned to Chinese rag-pickers, nothing legally could have been done about it until our consul in Hankow, in whose extraterritorial jurisdiction Lushan lies, had been officially notified and had come, or sent a deputy, to call me to account. Yet the terrors of anarchistic living did not make Kuling uninhabitable; on the other hand Kuling proved that men can live by agreement without force—in such a picked community. The rougher elements rarely get so far overseas, or so far inland and so high above sea-level; the community is further more or less sieved through a missionary screen, and if only the peddler and pet-Chinese nuisance can be abated many years may pass before there is a single case of manslaughter by a white man on Kuling.

But for all its situation Kuling is not China, and with the completion of a task on hand a troublesome conscience demanded that I continue my travels while the summer was still far from over. Luckily, since it was no time to drag wife and children out of this lofty Western oasis in an Eastern land, there was a journey well worth making from which a return to Kuling would be natural. For months I had been hearing that the one place in Kiangsi Province I should not pass by was the old city of Kingtehchen. Though to the Western world "china" has been synonymous with "China" for centuries, it is a rare Occidental who has ever heard the name of Kingtehchen; in fact hundreds of millions of the Chinese themselves show no sign of recognition at

sound of it; yet it has been the porcelain capital of China for a millennium, producing more high-grade china than all the rest of the country, and the only porcelain that wins any praise from connoisseurs.

Travel, like many other things in China, is fantastic in its difference from what the same word means in the Occident. Kingtehchen lay just across Poyang Lake from our summer home on Kuling, east by south, probably not a hundred miles as the airplane flies; yet the journey there and back would be probably longer in time, and several fold more so in hardships, than one from New York to Salt Lake City and return, all for the privilege of spending a day or two, like a hurried salesman, at the goal. In expense there was, to be sure, no comparison, unless one figured on the mileage covered, in which case the trip before me would be something like twice as costly as the hypothetical one from Broadway to Mormondom.

A coolie recruited and guaranteed—with the usual reservations—by a China-born foreigner, was of the opinion that seventy coppers a day, about an American quarter, would be a suitable reward for carrying my belongings, boiling my water and eggs, computing my “inn money,” and in general acting as my guide, philosopher, and protector. There would also be, naturally, the inevitable squeeze of a few coppers or “cash” on every expenditure the fellow made for me, the amount of which would depend upon my own vigilance, experience, and gullibility, and in any case would not reach the realms of high finance; but that of course we took for granted and we no more thought of speaking of it than of referring to the well-known fact that my new assistant would slip a portion of his advance wages into the hand of the servant who had summoned him instead of another.

The load was nothing, for a Chinese coolie—an army cot and some bedding, a few dishes, tins of cocoa, milk, and oatmeal, a small suitcase of personal belongings, a canteen of boiled water to be frequently replenished at inns and tea-houses along the way—not more than eighty pounds in all, so that as we jogged away through the Gap and down the road that runs like a shelf in and out along the upper hills of Lushan Range there was a hint that I, rather than my burdened companion, would be the laggard. Three well-traveled trails lead on as many sides from Kuling down to the world below, to say nothing of several headlong ones that follow precipitous mountain streams in their wild leaps from boulder-bed to tumbled masses of mighty rocks and possible only to the stoutest thighs and heads free from dizziness, descendants of those goat-trails by which the first foreigners at Lushan

had to scramble their way, literally now and then on hands and knees. Only one of them is familiar to any but the most venturesome of the Kuling colony, however, so that we left the Western world suddenly behind where the track to Ta-ku-t'ang splits off from the giant stairway to Kiukiang Plain and the outside world. Long lines of coolies were laboriously climbing the mountain at snail's pace on this side also, as up those tremendous back stairs to Kuling at the foot of which the little district city of Nankang squats on the edge of Poyang Lake, as it did long before Cæsar discovered the three component parts of Gaul. Some had baskets of huge squashes, and similar country produce in demand above, swinging at the ends of their springy shoulder-poles; most of them carried timbers of the size of telegraph-poles. These come from far down the lake and are used in great number in the building of Kuling. Boys not long in their teens carried one of them across an already deeply calloused shoulder, with a stout stick across the other to help support it; while the full-grown men, unless they had reached the age when their burdensome calling relegates them to the boy class again, carried two, tied together at the small ends in V-shape. Streaked with the sweat that had streamed over them at the sea-level beginning of their journey, their sun-browned bodies, covered with little more than a loin-cloth, seemed inclined to goose-flesh in the thick morning mists of the mountains even under their onerous exertions. He who cares to pick up the next pair of telegraph-poles he finds lying ready for erection and carry them for a few blocks down on the level where the air is still plentiful will understand why men inured for generations to such tasks groaned now and then as they mounted the incessant, everlasting stairway, why they paused here and there to rest an end of their burdens against the swift hillside, and even laid them down entirely every hour or so before some hut selling rice and tea.

Every little while the trail struck back into a deep gully, to leap a mountain stream foaming down over great boulders and come back almost to the same point before pushing on again. Whenever it came out on the intervening point of land the vast spread of Poyang Lake lay to the east and south as far as the eye could see, clear as glass in its deeper parts, yellow with shallowness in others, backed in part by a panorama of low mountain ranges purplish blue with distance. On each such vantage-point sat a tea-house, a crude construction of thatch and poles and mud bricks, dirty as a bear's den within, but with a crude table out under a porch-like extension of the roof, where shade and

breeze made the ragged keeper's offer of tea, and perhaps boiled rice, doubly tempting to passing coolies.

Though glimpses of nature almost at its wildest rewarded the sight, even my unburdened body soon realized that it was the middle of August, unimportant as that fact had seemed up on the mountains. By the time the trail had lost its youthful impetuosity and taken to winding leisurely down across mere rounded hills and in and out of paddy-fields of unreasonably fantastic shape, the sun struck down as with physical blows. Clumps of bamboo, mere fishing-poles on the height above, but now as large as trees, hung protectingly over the trail, giving a brief but welcome respite from a lowland heat that was beginning to more than hint of its real power. Lower still, where semi-arid hills cut off the breeze and threw back the fierce rays of the sun like the weapons of a besieging foe, regrets began to assail me that I had not trumped up some excuse to remain on Kuling a month or two longer.

A score of water-buffaloes awakening our envy, completely under water except for their wide-open nostrils, watched us curiously out of their little submerged eyes as we clambered up and down along the infertile shore of the lake, planted with nothing but rude and often dilapidated stone-built graves. A sail-boat ferry, every inch of its superstructure hidden under coolie-clad passengers, struck off on a zigzag course up the lake. From nearly a mile aloft this greatest permanent body of fresh water in China had seemed far less impressive in extent than here, looking across its ruffled, sun-flashing surface to where the eastern horizon was lost before it reached dry land again. Ta-ku-t'ang, the first day's goal, huddled on the point of a strip of land that had escaped only by a hair's breadth from being an island, though doubly secure from that fate now that man, never satisfied with the earth as it is given to him, had long since built a stone and gravel causeway where our trail must otherwise have drowned itself despairingly in the lake. On the slopes behind the compact town stood three or four larger isolated buildings that had a foreign air, but an abandoned one to boot, and through the sweat that half blinded me and left me as wet as if I had indeed plunged in with the contented water-buffaloes came the recollection that the Englishman who stood sponsor for my coolie had been born at Ta-ku-t'ang, of missionary parents who had long since left it for more promising fields. Out across the highest point of the almost-island stood the temple-crowned rock known far and wide as the Little Orphan, in contrast to the larger one which gave

the town before me its name. A high island along the Yang Tze usually has a temple or two on top, with a granite stairway up the face of the rock from a precarious landing, a holy place, after the Chinese fashion, in proportion to its inaccessibility.

The farther end of the causeway led directly into the main, and indeed the only, street of the town, filled with the stench inseparable from all the narrow alleys of southern China, abetted now by the leaden August heat and mingled with an almost stronger odor of the fish which Ta-ku-t'ang has taken daily from Lake Poyang since time immemorial. The street itself was anything but crowded, a fact so unnatural as to make it almost uncanny. The slight patter of my soft-shod feet and of the straw sandals of my carrier were the only sounds given back just then by its slimy flagstones, worn into an aspect of irregular cobbles by centuries of slipping and sliding along them. The sun was still too high for coolies and peddlers to stir willingly abroad; merchants stripped to the waist lolled in the damp shade of their shallow, mud-built shops; women, children, the very curs that infest the streets of China, even the black hogs that are such inseparable companions of the *Han-ren*, sons of Han, were drowsing half or wholly asleep on sawhorse-benches, on split-bamboo bedsteads, in mud-holes and nests of refuse along the way. August it was indeed, for normally neither the Chinese nor their four-footed companions can afford to take time off between the first hint of dawn and full darkness from their incessant struggle for the absolute necessities of life.

The arrival of a foreigner, particularly on foot, naturally cut short the town's unnatural siesta. Children, dogs, half-naked merchants, even the women—only the pigs of all visible living creatures remaining unmoved—shuffled out into the frontless shop-fronts to gaze and comment and shout questions after my jogging carrier, answers to which he flung at random over his unburdened shoulder. The ripple of reawakened life spread so rapidly that the corner food-sellers were already beating a tattoo again on their counters and shrieking anew the merits of their noisome concoctions before we paused to ask them that question on the answer to which hinges the comparative comfort or the almost complete absence thereof awaiting the foreigner arriving in any town of interior China:

“*Yo wai-kuo-ren, meyo?* Are there any outside-country people?”

A sharp explosive “*Yo*” from several gaping mouths both surprised and delighted me and sent us mounting the cross between a sewer and an alleyway up which, Chinese fashion, several pouting lips had pointed.

The English commissioner of customs, domiciled in a two-story house of undecided nationality inside the inevitable high brick wall, was still at the custom-house, according to his "boy," respectful as only a Chinese servant can be when on his best behavior before a white man who may have great influence with his master. But it is taken for granted by all concerned that the Westerner drifting into a town where one of his kind arrives only a few times a year has already been invited to become the guest of a lonely foreign resident. The "boy" brought me water in which to souse my red-hot face, and a bottle of it—boiled, on his word of honor—to drink, begged me to take a reclining chair, and told my carrier where to untie his loads and install himself, before he disappeared over the ridge in the direction of his master's office.

There was no personal flattery in the fact that my astonished host strode in and threw off his pith helmet in the briefest possible space thereafter; but that the welcome was to me racially rather than individually made it none the less agreeable. Strange as it may seem, this isolated official of the Chinese Maritime Customs, living hardly six hours afoot below Kuling, where thousands of his race dwell, had not seen a foreigner in weeks. By the time the welcoming concoction had been drained, the sun had lost its lofty fierceness, and we strolled out over the hill toward the custom-house.

In the offing lay what looked like floating villages; far up the lake two or three others were so slowly approaching that they seemed as fixed as the Little Orphan in the other direction. They were rafts of timbers from up country, poles such as we had seen carried up to Kuling all summer on men's backs. The district of Wucheng, far down at the southern end of the lake and its tributaries, is still wooded enough to furnish large quantities of this, in China, precious material. The rafts are not made in the usual way of merely tying one thickness of logs together, but are piled one layer on top of another until in many cases the examiners at the customs-station, who go armed with a special implement with which to measure the depth of the logs, find them seventeen feet under water—and of course about as much above it. On each of these floating lumber-yards is built a whole village, in which live the boatmen, or raftsmen, and their families, caretakers, hangers-on, passengers, and many of the harmless dregs of the Chinese race that gather wherever there is a chance of an occasional bowl of rice.

At Ta-ku-t'ang these floating villages must come to anchor, and those are fortunate—or would be if time seemed of any value to the





The first process in rice-planting may be hard on the peasant, but the water-buffalo is in his element and hungry ducks find many a tidbit turned up during the process



It is hard to realize that all over southern China, all over southern Asia for that matter, every blade of rice is set out by hand in the flooded fields to which it is carried in bundles from thickly growing seed-beds



As the rice is eternally thirsty almost up to the day it is ready for harvesting, many are the laborious schemes for raising water from the often scanty streams or mud-holes into the fields



Wherever rice grows in China it is threshed by beating out the heads of bundles as they are cut into a wooden box, a mat breaking the force of any wind, so that the "thump! thump! thump!" of harvest-time is as typical as is the threshing-machine on our prairies

Chinese—which are able to lift it again within a day or two. For the Chinese Maritime Customs, operated by foreigners more or less for the benefit of the Chinese, assess duty against all exports and imports passing the place, and that on a single raft of poles may reach two thousand taels—the tael, or Chinese ounce of silver, now that the question has come up, averaging around seventy-five American cents in exchange and several times more than that in actual purchasing-value in China. Yet that is by no means all; in fact it is a mere gnat-bite compared with the whole list of assessments against such a cargo. That legalized form of plunder genially called customs that sits astride the frontiers of most countries to-day is mild in China, thanks to its compulsory minimizing under her treaties with foreign powers, but on the other hand there is *likin*. *Lee-gin*, to write it as the Chinese pronounce it, is somewhat similar to the *octroi* of many European countries; it consists of duties levied between provinces, between districts, at the entrance to, and what is even worse, at the passing by, of many towns. Under the hundreds of virtually independent military dictatorships into which China is broken up to-day it has come to mean a forced levy at every point where any one has power enough to force goods passing it to pay; and the distinction between *likin* stations that are more or less legal and bandit assessments pure and simple is so slight that the rank and file of Chinese engaged in transporting native products through the interior often do not distinguish one from the other. In theory foreign goods do not pay *likin*; in present-day practice they pay about what the local ruler chooses to assess against them, and foreign merchants and their consuls may protest in vain.

But to come back to our rafts at Ta-ku-t'ang. The *likin* charges there alone often amount to twice the custom duties, and days may be lost before the formalities connected with the two forms of assessment are over and the raft-borne villages free to float on their way again. Even then they do not float far unmolested. They are assessed again where Poyang Lake opens into the Yang Tze, at every place worthy a name on the map on the way down the river, and again at their destination. A dozen times at least they are halted for varying lengths of time to await the sweet will of native assessors backed by a semi-uniformed and more or less armed rabble of soldiery at points which show a constant tendency to increase in number and in charges, all the way from the forests to Nanking or Shanghai, and the sum total would strain the financial standing of any but large groups or companies. Were the Chinese *likin* system constitutionally within the power of the

politicians of our own land, goods shipped from New York to New Orleans would be months in transit, and at every city along the way, at every state boundary, at every place where a local boss had force enough at his disposal to demand it, new charges would be laid upon the ultimate consumer. Yet there is said to be "big money" in this exporting of poles from those parts of southern China where even half-grown trees still survive, which explains why the pillars of the Temple of Heaven in Peking are Oregon pine and why lumber all the way from our Pacific coast can often be sold in Shanghai and other treaty-ports cheaper than the native timbers.

Whether it was due to an individual spirit of democracy at variance with the caste rules of his nation and service or merely to an isolation which forced him to accept companionship where he could find it, my host made a practice of dining every few days with the higher Chinese members of his force. I might have been more disappointed at the prospect of a chop-stick dinner that evening, which chanced to be one of those when the commissioner was a guest of his staff, had I not just left behind me months of as nearly American food as our Chinese servants on Kuling could provide. Besides, were it possible to make clear to the Celestials as a whole the line between cleanliness and its antithesis, not many races besides the French would rank above the Chinese in the excellence of their cuisine. I believe I am not expressing merely a personal taste in stating that foreigners traveling in the interior of China almost all go to the trouble and expense, modest though they be, of taking along their own cooks, their cooking utensils, and much of their food, not because they cannot endure Chinese food, but because of the sudden or lingering death that so often lurks in the methods of its preparation and serving. My chop-stick wielding had become at least as fluent as the pidgin Chinese I had picked up at random during eighteen months of wandering in the former empire, and I no longer faced the bare round table of a Chinese meal with the added fear of being unable to fish my own share from the common bowls before rival gourmands had emptied them. I had even reached the point where the frequent shouts of "*Gambay!*" had not the terrors for me which at first this demand to show at a gulp an empty upturned wine-cup had produced at Chinese feasts. In short, our dinner at Ta-ku-t'ang was a success on every point, and an assurance into the bargain that I should not suffer the pangs of hunger for at least twenty-four hours to come.

The wanderer in China could get along moderately well, in so far as

food is concerned, if he never ran across a fellow-foreigner and *ipso facto* host; it is the restful night of unbroken sleep, in contrast to the often unbroken nightmare of a Chinese inn, that leaves each such windfall of good luck forever stamped on the memory. But, alas! Ta-ku-t'ang was not to leave any such memory. What with the skin burning as with a high fever which the first day's tramp in weeks off the mountain-top above had given me, augmented by the all but unavoidable consumption—unless it had been on the utterly false assertion of adherence to the missionary caste—of Chinese and foreign beverages of a potency that never graced my own sideboard, and the unbelievable fact that my host had so far forgotten the ways of his native land as never once to mention the magic word "tub" in my presence, I was never more nearly grilled on a mere cot during all my meanderings. The night air that stood like a stagnant fluid within the room, taking no benefit whatever from the wide-open windows, seemed to have been specially prepared in a superpowerful furnace. Nor had I fully stripped before the night-watchman of Ta-ku-t'ang made his first round under our windows.

This strange survival of a curious old civilization had made other nights miserable for me, but never before had I endured one fit to be mentioned in the same curse with this diabolical denizen of Poyang lake-side. The theory of those who hire a Chinese watchman is that unless he makes a din at regular intervals there is no proof that he is not snugly sleeping in some cozy corner. We have much the same system at home, except that we have eliminated the noise. The thought of the fellow himself, however, being of a race that would rather eat than fight, is indubitably, even though it may be unconsciously, that he would much sooner give thieves and assassins ample time and copious warning than to run the risk of coming to grips with them. In his milder manifestations he accomplishes this result by beating together a pair of clapping-sticks, or by pounding a section of bamboo, a resonant piece of wood, a tin pan, or some other simple means of auditory torture. Some of these ordinary specimens of the genus that so often drives to the bursting-point nerves already weary with incessant existence among the Chinese even go so far as to intersperse their round of duties with brief intervals of silence. But the pride of Ta-ku-t'ang would no doubt have considered them insufferable slackers. His own equipment, as nearly as I can judge from one endless night of listening to it, consisted of six plowshares, a dozen links of logging-chain, four pans of varying sizes and tones, one of those Chinese substi-

tutes for a drum in the shape of a large wooden sleigh-bell, than which nothing will drive sound deeper into the nerve-centers, a few assorted but unidentified pieces of junk, the most powerful pair of lungs in Asia, and an absolutely indefatigable sense of duty and the unlimited endurance that so properly goes with it. Ta-ku-t'ang, after all, is not large. There was no part of it from which its nightly protector could not be clearly heard, so that all night long, without a break, he was either directly under our windows or not more than a stone's throw away from them—had I but laid in a supply of stones—clashing the plowshares together, shaking and seesawing the chain-links, somehow pounding all four pans at one and the same time, beating the resonant hollow-wood contrivance with unbroken continuity and faultless rhythm, throwing the assorted junk incessantly together, and at all times shrieking at the top of a voice that should have been perfectly able without mechanical assistance to put to ignominious flight all the night-prowling malefactors in Kiangsi Province. Those priestly orgies for the driving out of Chinese devils are a mere whisper by comparison. Slowly, at snail's pace, taking full ten minutes to pass one side of the Englishman's house and moving at a similar gait around the rest of his short beat, he kept up all night long with perfect perpetuity this incredible miscellaneous uproar, now and again joined, it seemed, by a few friends or some of the gay night-hawks of the town, who lent whole-heartedly their raucous, wine-hoarsed voices and their physical assistance with the noise-producing paraphernalia.

At least it was continuous, and in so far an improvement over many of the less diligent night-watchmen of China. Most of them break out into silence just long enough to let the suffering overland traveler fall all but asleep before they begin their clangor again, and this constant dragging back from the very brink of sleep is really more exquisite torture than a night of complete consciousness. No doubt the fates were thoughtful in giving me that night in Ta-ku-t'ang as a preliminary to a long year of roving through southern China, for I was doomed to lie awake listening to many a night-watchman during that twelvemonth to come, and I could always temper the torture by reflecting that at least this scarer of thieves and protector of virtue was not the equal as a noise-producer of his colleague at Ta-ku-t'ang.

At dawn the fellow went suddenly off duty, and the ensuing silence was startling. I had almost grown so accustomed to it again that I might have dropped off to sleep had not my host sprung lithely out of

bed in the adjoining room and pranced in upon me with the face and greeting of a fairy godmother.

"Morning! Hope you had a good night?"

"Did you?" I countered, with forced cheerfulness.

"Ripping! I never slept better."

"They seem to take good care to protect you."

"How do you mean?"

"Your night-watchman seems to be a diligent, dutiful fellow."

"Oh, that chap! You know, when I was first transferred here he made so much noise I could hardly sleep. But of course I'm so used to him now that I never hear him; probably could n't sleep without him."

Truly the adaptability of the human frame is marvelous.

The sun was barely started on another of his blistering journeys across the cloudless August heavens when I strode downhill to the waterfront, my coolie-borne belongings jogging behind me. Naturally the boatmen whom my host's lowliest servant had been sent at daylight to summon had not yet eaten rice or stirred from their moorings behind the causeway on the inland side of the town. It was more than an hour later that we passed the point at the foot of the Englishman's alleyway from which it had been agreed the night before we were to start. Slowly the uncovered sampan crawled up the edge of the lake, under cover of the village-bearing rafts, then of a spit of land, the sun already beating unmercifully down upon us. Though the clumsy craft had been hired to set us directly across the lake, some Chinese superstition made it necessary to creep miles up it before the real passage began. The boatmen whistled and at length yelled vociferously for wind, but they hardly knew how to use it when the spirits to which they were appealing saw fit to give us a few puffs. When it comes to hard work the boatmen of China have few equals; but in the matter of carrying sail they rank among the most timid of created beings. It is the same characteristic, of course, that produced the noisy night-watchman and raised a mighty wall, at incredible labor, across the top of their country rather than risk a few battles with their enemies outside it.

All morning Lushan stood out blue in the mists behind us; I found my eyes wandering often to the profile of the Lion's Leap down the sheer face of which I had gazed during Kuling excursions, like a row of five granite mountains broken in two and one half thrown away—as indeed they were, though the throwing endured for millions of years.

The mountainous horizon across the lake must have approached imperceptibly if at all, for there was nothing to indicate that we were any nearer it when—not two hours after breakfast, as the boatmen had promised me the night before, but well after noon—we reached a town on the eastern shore, only to find that just then it was well out in the lake. The summer floods had only begun to subside, and though the slimy semi-cobbled single street of the stenching hamlet, a part of the overland trail, was above water, the continuation of it for several miles beyond lay through temporary swamps and streams that in places were chest-deep. Luckily there is always some one at hand in China ready to undertake anything promising a modest reward, and by the time my carrier had wolfed a heaping bowl of dry rice, accompanied by a kind of salad of chopped vegetables in which red peppers predominated, while I made way with more appetizing provender from his load, a youth stood at the foot of the street with another sampan. For an hour or more he rowed, gondola fashion, as is overwhelmingly the custom in southern China. The flooded country shrank until only a stream filled to overflowing remained; this gradually showed semi-jungled banks above the muddy surface, and at length the youngster landed us on a flagstone trail emerging from the water and left us free at last to set our own pace again.

The bare three hours of daylight left brought us to half a dozen houses, all of them inns and shops also, straddling the trail near a sharp corner. There was no choice but to accept what accommodations were quickly granted us in the largest of them, the usual wide-open room with uneven hard Mother Earth as floor, scattered with several dirty square wooden tables flanked by the eight-inch sawhorses which the great mass of the Chinese consider chairs, and overrun with pigs, gaunt curs, fowls, and runny-nosed children still in the bottomless trousers that save Chinese mothers so much washing. In one corner facing the unwallled street stood the inevitable mud-brick cooking-stove and all the varied paraphernalia of the lowest form of Chinese restaurant, alternately attended by the usual bedraggled female, soil-incrusted beyond Western conception, and by her perhaps slightly less unwashed husband. At the back one might have made out, but for the gloom the setting sun and a complete lack of windows had left there, the doorways, perhaps with a battered caricature of a door hanging in each of them, to three or four mud dens, furnished with as many "beds"—merely uneven boards laid across sawhorses and each covered with a thin, worn, and dirty grass mat of the thickness of cardboard—as could be crowded end to end around the room. Normally I should have occupied the least



uninviting of these cells, having some of the "beds" thrown out if necessary to make room for my cot; but the insufferable heat of August had given me a daring idea.

A few yards down the trail stagnated one of those more or less muddy water-holes that abound in the rice-growing portion of China. As soon as dusk had grown thick enough so that it was not discourteous to the virtuous damsels of the place I stripped and submerged myself in this lukewarm reservoir and returned clad for the night just as my companion began setting out on a newly washed table my humble evening meal. Luckily pajamas are so little different from the summertime garb of Chinese men that there is nothing unseemly in a procedure which in time became almost a fixed habit with me on the road in southern China, and the inevitable throng of all the sight-seers within call that quickly gathered closer and closer about me was not drawn by any fault of my own, unless the mere fact of not being Chinese is one. The inhabitants were fortunately few and travelers spending the night here far between, which made it possible that the daring plan I had in mind might be feasible.

This was none other than to sleep out of doors! Next to the impossibility of ever getting away from the Chinese, of sometimes being alone, the greatest hardship of travel in China is the complete lack of choice in stopping-places. By day your coolies will walk their legs off rather than sit down for a moment in a grassy, shaded spot in the open country, as they will suffer any form of punishment rather than pass a single pig-, cur-, and urchin-overrun hamlet without laying down their loads and refreshing themselves in it. The greatest advantage of riding your own feet instead of a chair is that you and not your carriers choose the spots in which your daytime breathing-spells are taken. But at night the tramper and the chair-passenger are equally helpless. There seem literally to be no inducements, in all the gamut from rewards to punishments, from blandishments to brain-storms, that will make possible a halt for the night in any but the most crowded, noisy, smelly, breathless, pig- and cur-infested place that is to be found within a day's journey. No one carries a tent and camps out in China proper; in at least eight cases out of ten it would be impossible to find an unoccupied piece of ground large and fit enough to be camped upon, and in these modern days there are at least potential robbers and bandits on every trail. Though even the least fastidious foreigners seldom travel off the main steamer and railway routes without their own cot and bedding, the mud dens miscalled rooms at Chinese inns are not inviting even with one's own furnishings. In this midsummer season,

when the dens themselves had been tightly closed and the entire removable front of the house set up, as is the Chinese custom by night in any weather, I knew that another all-night grilling awaited me.

When my supper remained nothing but a brief job of dish-washing for the carrier who was eating his own in common with two or three other guests, I nonchalantly picked up my cot, still wrapped in its canvas-covered bundle of bedding, and strolled out into the street. For a moment I thought my ruse had worked and that I should escape the attentions of the curious. I had almost reached the sharp corner of the trail ten yards away before my hopes were blasted. Before I could unroll my bedding my carrier stood beside me. Close on either side of the trail were rice-fields almost ready for harvesting. The only space outdoors larger than a dog's nest and not covered with filth was this corner of the trail, just wide enough for my purpose and, strangely enough, covered with grass.

"*Hsien-sheng* wishes me to open his bed out here?" asked my companion, with that respect unmixed with sycophancy which Chinese servants unspoiled by too much intercourse with foreigners attain to perfection, at the same time helping me to do so.

"Earlier-born" had exactly that desire, I implied with a simple "Yao."

"When *Hsien-sheng* wishes it taken inside I will come," he offered, as I crawled inside the mosquito-net with which I had fitted the cot by a simple system of uprights.

"No need for that," I replied; "you may go and sleep."

As I had expected, he did not move far away. It was evident that I must tell the whole truth unless I wished him to stand, or at best lie, ready all night to answer my call, and he needed rest at least as much as I, even though, after the manner of his race and calling, he did not openly admit it.

"Take care of the things inside," I added; "I shall sleep here all night."

"*Hsien-sheng* will stay outdoors all night?" he repeated, after he had stood silent a full minute in order to rid the phrase of the accent of astonishment he would have considered discourteous.

"All night," I reiterated.

He stood for a long time motionless, like a man who has reached a sudden unexpected crisis that calls for some form of action, yet who for the life of him cannot decide what that action should be. At length

he moved a step nearer and said in the same monotonously even tones of respect:

"The moon is shining."

"All the better," I answered, pulling a thin cover over me.

I had been long enough in China to know what was passing through his head. Whoever heard of a human being sleeping out of doors at night, he was no doubt reflecting, above all under a full moon? If I did not get moonstruck, there were the evil spirits, the deadly night air, robbers, assassins, bandits. Right out in the road at that! Of course all foreigners are more or less insane, but . . .

It would not do to let that suspicion of my sanity impress him too strongly; I might find him missing in the morning, for all the hold I had on him through the man who had hired him. Moreover he felt personally responsible for returning me safe and sound, and it would be unkind to over-worry him.

"We Americans often do this," I remarked. "Lose care."

He moved slowly and reluctantly away, stood for some time in the edge of the moonlight before the one board of the shop-front that had not yet been put in place. At length he slowly disappeared inside. As many as two minutes may have passed before another man stood beside me. He was a coolie also, either a fellow-guest or a villager.

"*Yang hsien-sheng* will sleep outdoors, under the moon?" he asked, with just a hint of amusement and wonder in his voice which the man in my employ would not have thought proper to use to my face. I affirmed his conjecture. He stood motionless for so long that at length I looked up to see what had become of him. Three of his fellows had silently gathered close behind him.

"*Yang hsien-sheng* will sleep outdoors, under the moon?" queried one of them. A faint ripple of laughter passed over the group at my grunt of confirmation. Two belated travelers, for some strange reason out nearly an hour after dark, pattered up and increased the motionless gathering.

"*Yang ren*; it's a foreigner," explained one of the original group; "He will sleep outdoors."

"Outdoors!" said the new-comers, in one breath and in such a tone as they might have used on hearing that Confucius had returned to earth in person.

"And the moon shining," added another half-breathless voice.

Several more minutes passed, broken only by a few faint whispers among the by-standers. I looked up again, to find that they had been

increased several fold. All the village and its guests had evidently come; there were women young and old hovering on the outskirts of the little crowd, and two or three of them carried babies on their backs. One untied a child of three or four, swung it around in front of her, and held it up so that it could peer through the net at me.

"It's an outside-country man," she said, as one of our own mothers might call a child's attention to some outlandish animal of which she had vaguely heard but which there was little likelihood that even the child would ever have a chance to see again; "an ocean-man, and he is going to sleep outdoors, in the moonshine!"

I made out my carrier on the edge of the gathering, in his very attitude a mixture of lost face, worried sense of responsibility, a touch of amusement, and something mildly akin to pride at his connection with so strange a being. When one is short on Chinese cuss-words anything in English with the proper inflection will do almost as well.

"For the love of Mike, Liu," I cried, my more than limited command of Chinese not including any equivalent of that expression and not wishing to use a stronger one that even the Chinese avoid in polite society, "tell them to go home to bed!"

The end of the peroration being in my best Chinese, Liu evidently credited me with making myself understood without his help. He moved slowly away, and one by one the crowd wandered off after him. Most of them wormed their way through the narrow opening still left in the inn-front. They were of course going to pump my companion on the ways of foreigners. Voices and frequent bursts of laughter inside indicated that he was obliging them. As a man who had been at Kuling he would naturally be an authority on outside barbarians, and he would not have been Chinese if he had not made the most of his opportunity. Three or four men still hovered within a yard of me. Now and again a whisper and muffled titters rose from them. I caught the words "and the moon shining" as they withdrew at a snail's pace. Every few minutes for at least another hour a man or two wandered up, to stand silently gazing at me for some time, sometimes to whisper a bit, and then move slowly and noiselessly away again. I began to wonder whether all the drawbacks to sleeping inside would not be preferable to this, but I determined to stick it out in the hope of establishing a precedent with my carrier. Besides, my whole race would lose face if I gave up now. At last the final board of the shop-front clanged to, cutting off the faint streak of light that had lain across the moon-lighted shadow of the front of the building. The sounds inside gradually died

down. I fell asleep. Three or four times during the night I was awakened by the sense of some one standing near me. Once at least it was Liu; when my movement showed that I was still alive he slunk silently away again. How he passed in and out of the closed inn was not apparent. But when dawn woke me I was aware of a much better night's rest than I had hoped; the village was too small to boast a watchman, and for some reason even its dogs had given me a few hours of peace. The expression on Liu's face when I found him tying on new straw sandals showed that I had won, that he was convinced of the foreigner's immunity even to moonlight, and that I might sleep out of doors to my heart's content, so far as he and his influence went, during the rest of the journey. All that day I heard from groups along the trail and in every hamlet or tea-house we passed whispers and monosyllables of astonishment, with the words "outdoors, and the moon shining" now and then audible.

All day we tramped, from sunrise to dusk, on a typical road of southern China—flagstones barely three feet long and averaging a foot in width laid crosswise and worn smooth as polished marble by the passing of generations, probably of centuries, of straw sandals, ruts two inches deep by actual measurement cut in the stones, especially the huge ones laid lengthwise as bridges, by the wheelbarrows, winding, twisting, sharp-turning incessantly to follow the dikes between the paddy-fields that must not have their contours in the slightest degree changed for the benefit of the traveling public. Had there been room to walk on earth on either side of this irrevocable stone tortuosity the hardships of the trip would have been at least cut in two; but it dropped sheer on either side into ripening paddy-fields a foot or more below, and there was never a moment's respite from pounding along on the stones themselves. The feet of my carrier, of the myriad Chinese, mainly coolies and peasants, files of from a few to unbroken quarter-miles of whom we were constantly sidling past, were so thickly calloused with centuries of this travel that they seemed to prefer the stones and did not even take advantage of the two or three steps of earth going where the flagstones had been broken in two or washed a bit to one side by the floods of some unusually rainy summer. But a mere four score years of tramping had not hardened my own feet to any such perfection.

Not the faintest feather of a cloud dulled the blazing mid-August sun, so that between the pounding stones underfoot and the beating rays overhead I felt indeed like one being ground between the upper

and the nether millstones. The only reliefs from this were heavy tile roofs raised on brick pillars, with seats like crude park benches, made of logs or mud bricks, between them, that here and there straddled the trail, especially on hilltops, or, more exactly, on this trip, knoll-tops. These not merely give shade, but the absence of walls brought through them a delightful breeze, of which one was not conscious at all out in the grilling sunshine, so that the change from tramping in this to sitting for a few minutes in the shade of one of these shelters was as great as that between the places of punishment and of reward in the orthodox Christian imagination. Some of these boons to carriers and wheelbarrow-men in particular, and to all pedestrians, are erected by the local governments, but most of them are due to pious individuals of some more or less distant past who thereby hoped, Buddhist fashion, to acquire merit. Few of the thousands of Chinese travelers marched through one of them without a halt; hence they became the fixed meeting-places of those of us going in the same direction and the clearing-houses of gossip from the east and west.

Tea- and rice-shops, too, were a relief from the hellish tramping, but less so than the rest-roofs, for they were always disgusting places in shorter or longer collections of mud dens crowding close against the trail, usually on both sides, with some old mats or other rubbish thrown from eaves to eaves across the road itself and more or less completely shading it. Slattern, filthy women with bound feet, children that seemed to have wallowed in garbage-heaps since birth, scalp-diseases, ulcerated dogs, scavenging pigs so gaunt that they looked tubercular, men stripped to the waist, and all the rest of rural domestic life in China mingled with the shop and restaurant features of these places, invariably homes as well as marts of commerce. Once he had set his load down in one of these, it was hard to get my carrier under way again. If he did not actually spend a few coppers and eat, he at least had his cold tea and a pipe. This was one of the few regions of China where any but hot tea seemed to be in demand. Every shop catering to travelers had a large wooden bucket, with cover and spout, sitting on the earth floor in some convenient corner, and each new-comer, often every passer-by, picked up a cheap china bowl from one of the square wooden tables and poured himself a drink of tea. As ice is unknown here, the tea was at best lukewarm, but countless coppers were squandered on this sad relative of iced tea, sure sign that the weather was extraordinarily hot, for the Chinese of the foot-going classes is not normally often troubled by thirst, and is sparing of his coppers even when he is.

At every inhabited stop my carrier must have his pipe. He had none of his own, but on one of the tables of every tea- and food-shop which made any serious pretense of catering to the passing files stood one of the water-pipes of China, of brass, sometimes with decorated porcelain sides; and my coolie invariably ended a meal or a bowl of tea by picking this up, taking out of the well for it in the pipe itself a pinch of tobacco, fine as horsehair, with the little sharp-pointed implement like our sugar-tongs which forms part of the equipment of such pipes, thrust this into the tiny pipe-bowl, lighted it with a spill of native brown paper, filled his lungs with the water-cooled smoke, expelled it in a snow-white cloud, blew the residue out of the removable brass rod containing the bowl, then repeated the process several times until he had inhaled as many puffs. Whereupon he would set the pipe back on the table or hand it to a fellow-guest, squat under his carrying-pole while the divided load was still on the ground, adjust the light ropes which dangled this some three feet below the ends of the springy pole, and, standing up suddenly with a straight back, he would be off again at the jog-trot out of which your Chinese carrier very seldom falls on level ground. The pipe seemed to be included in the price of tea or food, something like the "free" lunch provided in the good old days by our saloons.

It was rice-threshing time. Everywhere as far as the eye could see in any direction the waving fields of grain, their water drained off, were being reduced to bare fields of stubble, rendering them as unsightly in comparison as a clipped head that had hitherto worn long golden tresses. A view across the rice-fields of southern China at harvest-time is not much different from one across our western wheat-fields in the same season, though here planting, reaping, and threshing are done entirely by hand. Wherever rice grows in China it is threshed by catching the cycle-cut bundles by the butts and beating the heads out by striking them half a dozen times on the inside of a heavy square wooden box, looking much like a clumsy rowboat with the ends sawed off and boarded up, a reed-mat shield above it to windward if there is breeze enough to blow any of the precious grains out of the receptacle. When harvest-time comes these cumbersome threshing-boxes take legs all over southern China and begin to walk about from paddy-field to field, on single or double pairs of shanks, the carrying coolies inside them otherwise invisible. This is as near as China comes to the threshing-days, with great engine-drawn separators and overflowing kitchens, of our wheatlands. At least two or three, sometimes four, men stand on as many sides of these boxes and beat the rice-heads out

into them, so that never for a moment during all my journey across to Kingtehchen was the dull *thump! thump! thump!* of the rice-boxes silent while the faintest daylight lasted. Many of the boxes had two or three Chinese characters painted on them, which seemed to be the name of the owner and sometimes a semi-affectionate name for the box itself, as in some bucolic corners of the world engine-drivers still name their locomotives.

Boys sometimes threshed, too, but rarely the women, for they had not feet enough to endure such labor long. They worked in the fields for all that, but usually at such tasks as weeding and pulling peanuts—the most common crop on the slightly raised knolls which it is hard to flood for rice—where they could sit down, when standing on their little bound feet became unbearable, on the little wooden stools, like miniature sawhorses, that they carried with them. It was the female and juvenile members of the family who swept the ground and gathered every grain after the box had been carried on, and sometimes they winnowed the rice in the wind before it was spread out on mats to dry, a part to go for rent and the rest to keep the growers alive until the following spring, that they might grow more rice to keep themselves alive again over still another winter. The hand-threshed rice-straw is carried home by simpler methods than pitching it into a team-hauled wagon, usually by having some two score bundles of it, tied together in pairs by the empty heads, hung over a long shoulder-pole, a coolie trotting in the middle. The threshing was much more important than immediate attention to the straw, so that nearly all the beheaded bundles were set up in shocks in the sheared fields.

Here and there sounded the songs of birds; blood-red dragon-flies flitted back and forth, often so close to my ears that they sounded like airplanes high aloft; the coolies and country-people were pleasant, quite unlike their fellows of Kuling; the incessant, senseless winding of the stone trail, the heat rising from it in rays as visible as steam from Niagara in winter, could be made a sort of forced amusement if there was nothing else to keep the mind off the laborious going. The constant streams of travelers, 98 per cent pedestrians, half of them undernourished, naked to the waist, their ribs showing—for though the plain is rich the people are poor, and if the soil were twice as bountiful there would soon be twice as many mouths for it to feed—were no less interesting than the foot-blistering trail, and I never quite got used to the endless files of them forever passing, to no apparent purpose.

Until I had grown so accustomed to it as no longer to be conscious



of the pounding of rice-heads on the boxes the sound every now and then suggested distant thunder; and a thrill of pleasure ran through me at the thought that this unbearable, cloudless heat was to be tempered, even at the expense of a wet skin and perhaps soaked baggage. The rain never came, but it was with almost as much relief as disappointment that we began to run into flooded country. It commenced toward noon on the third day from Kuling. Heavy rains somewhere out of our ken, no doubt up in the mountains on the far horizons, where rise the rivers we now and then crossed, had overflowed them weeks before, perhaps at the time our front steps had been a Niagara and Kuling lost so many roads and bridges, and the waters still stretched like vast shallow lakes across the flat rice-lands. Though it was almost more than lukewarm, there was a certain relief in wading in the water, as we did incessantly for a full fifty *li*, a generous fifteen miles, in depths varying from our ankles to our thighs, except for a few hundred yards across a deep river in the center of this great unnatural lake, where clumsy ferries plied. All this, in total more than a day of wading, was also on the wandering flagstone road, and the difficulty was to find it, and above all to keep it, for to step off it was to flounder in the mud of the paddy-fields, with water at least to the waist. Yet the zig-zagging, squirming, erratic trail hidden under the waters yellowish gray with mud pounded the feet as hard as ever.

Even when our thighs had grown so weary with wading that it seemed impossible to drag our legs another yard through the water, there was no means of getting relief. One could hardly sit down in the water, and merely standing still is no great relief for weary legs. Only once in a while did we come upon a clump of trees on a knoll, usually with some of the stone-made graves of this part of China under them, the only thing above water for miles about, and there we would sit and hobnob with coolie travelers equally exhausted with wading under a blistering sun. For of course the sun's rays reflected from the shallow, half-heated water burned even the browned faces of Chinese countrymen, to say nothing of my own. Houses as well as compound walls, which in this part of China are made of thin bricks half as large as a tea-table top stood up in the form of boxes one layer above the other and each box filled with earth, had fallen into the flood that seeped in under them, and at least a small local famine was promised in the area that had been flooded before the rice was ready for harvesting. The peasants along the way were trying to save what they could; and in those places where the narrow trail was for

miles the only land above water, it was almost impassable because of the bundles of rice-straw, more or less soaked and in some cases still in the ear, set in tight rows on either side of it and leaving only the narrowest lane between them, through which carriers laboriously but uncomplainingly sidled their way.

As I anticipated, I had little difficulty in sleeping out on the second night across the lake. Dusk overtook us this time at a somewhat larger, consequently more filthy, village situated at a Z in the trail rather than at a mere bend. It would almost have been preferable to stand up all night even on legs limp with a hundred *li* of tramping and wading rather than to spend it in one of the dozen dens that posed as restaurants and tea-houses; yet there was no space beside the trail large and unfilthy enough for my cot. But across a hybrid creek and stagnant water-hole from which the town dipped the fluid abomination which served it as water I found a space where the rice had been cut so recently that there had not yet been time to plow and fertilize and plant it with something else. My servant had completely regained his poise, and not merely put up most of the cot himself but shooed away on his own initiative the curious who began to gather about it. His sense of responsibility and the pride in his knowledge of foreigners and their strange ways combined to give him self-confidence enough to impose his will on all those of his own class in the village, so that though now and then travelers, coming in from a little side trail passing my place of repose, paused, or a bolder villager, including an occasional prowling cur or foraging pig, ventured around to me over the new bridge, and though it was evident from the voices and the laughter that floated across the feculent water-hole from the closed hovels that I and all that outside world of which I was taken to be an exact example were furnishing to that noblest form of man, the sons of Han, much amusement, I was still more wholly refreshed when we struck out again next morning.

The heat was even more deadening, the dirt, dogs, and diseases along the way as unbroken as ever, the wading severe; and the only thing that saved me was that I went on ahead while Liu was still eating rice and lay down on the bottom of a clear flowing stream for nearly an hour before he finished his borrowed pipe and overtook me. The contrast between a cool, well-washed body and a grilled skin basting within sweat-dripping clothes was so vast that I asked him if he did not wish to bathe also, implying that I would willingly give him time



Since boyhood this potter of Kingtehchen has sat at his wheel, even now whirling rapidly under the propulsion of a few vigorous turns with an inserted stick



The "three graces" are familiar figures in Chinese homes, and are made in many materials besides this porcelain of Kingtehchen



Millions of dishes of all sizes and descriptions melt together in the kilns and are thrown away or made into walls and embankments



The smaller articles are dipped in glaze; the larger have it blown on them through a tin blow pipe

to do so; but he answered "No" in a way to suggest that only insane foreigners ever did such things. When he had come to his inn at night he invariably got a shallow wooden tub of hot water and washed at least his head, hands, and feet, sometimes even his whole body; but nothing probably could have induced him to bathe in cold water, above all out in the open and a flowing stream.

My lodging-place on the fourth night promised to be even better than the preceding two. I had hoped to reach Kingtehchen that day, but plod as we would, through floods and along slimy pieces of trail from which they had just subsided, dusk overtook us with more than a hard hour's going left; and recalling that it is often more unpleasant to spend a night in a Chinese city, especially if one gets in after dark and there are no foreign residents on whom to foist oneself, than out on the road, I called a halt at Lo-kan-chow, eight *li* short of our goal. Half the village consisted of shop-dwellings in place of railings on either side of an old arched stone bridge across the Chang Kiang, recalling Florence; the rest was a dozen similarly sad buildings set up on land against a high bank at the eastern end of the bridge. We ate and took inn-rights at one of the shops on the bridge, but set up my bed on a grassy hillock half-way between the top of the uninhabited west end of it and the surface of the river. A few grave-mounds, grassed over in a way to suggest that the inmates had been a long time dead, stood along the sloping bank beside and above me; below was a little shingled beach. I luxuriated in a long swim, with the population of the town, the feminine portion only partly in the background, and its guests for the night, Liu conspicuous among them, gazing down upon me. My carrier's eloquent explanation of the strange ways of foreigners, together with a view of my sleeping-quarters from aloft, seemed to satisfy most of the local curiosity, for only once or twice did a pair drift down to stand gazing in upon me and to ask the usual inane question. But it was not the night it promised to be for all that. The moon being full, fishermen with casting-nets and torches were busy all along the river, and if there was an hour when their lights flashing in my face as they passed, the splashing of their nets, and that incessant chattering without which no two or more Chinese can be gathered together during their waking time left me in unbroken repose, I was not conscious of it when I crawled forth again at dawn.

## CHAPTER V

### KINGTEHCHEN, THE CHINA-TOWN OF CHINA

**T**HE sun was not yet high on the fifth cloudless August day, equally blistering overhead and underfoot, from our mountain-top summer home, when I found myself and my carrier-servant embarking, along with as much of the endless train of foot-travelers and bearers of everything the country round about produces as one of the several crude free ferries across the river between a miserable faubourg and Kingtehchen itself could carry. The ancient city of porcelain stretched out of sight in either direction along the concave shore of a curve in the river, compact as only a Chinese town can be, the backs of the first row of its at most two-storied buildings casting their refuse down upon the waterfront. Broad stone stairways, slimy with the sloppings of water-carriers and the garbage that oozed out upon them, ran at intervals sidewise in long slopes up the high bank, which seemed to be made entirely of broken and ruined pottery, ranging from masses of badly kilned clay to all sizes of what had once been brilliantly colored porcelain bowls, plates, even huge costly vases. Hundreds of boats—from one-man sampans to craft as large as tugboats, their rounded mat tops giving them a resemblance to prairie-schooners, all unpainted and crude as the ferry that had sculled us across—lay in compact masses below the bank. Many were heavily loaded with pine cut and split in stove-wood lengths; scores were sunk deep with cargoes of paddy, or unhulled rice, huge squashes, and all the country produce of Kiangsi Province; by far the majority were unladen, the homes of the large floating population, or waiting for new cargoes, or both. The shrieks of the boat people, of streams of carriers jostling one another on the stairways, of bedraggled policemen berating and even striking coolies at every ghost of provocation, of venders loudly announcing their wares in the town beyond, of children at play or in pain, the pounding of gangs of men building or repairing boats, piling up or tumbling down the heaps of half-grown logs that lay at sharp angles here and there along the bank, the barking and yelping of curs foraging for garbage along the waterfront, the grunts and

squeals of pigs similarly engaged, all mingled together in a Chinese chorus that left the ears weary.

The principal business street, just inside the endless row of house-shops backing out over the river like horses in too short stalls, was as narrow, stenched, thronging with shrieking human beings and all that coolies carry, as any I had seen in China. All the vigilance and energy at my ill-slept command was needed to thread my way through the jostling, helter-skelter human stream, to sidestep incessantly the creaking wheelbarrows, the pole-swung burdens that constantly threatened ribs, hips, and thighs, to avoid contact with all the moving and static filthiness of a busy Chinese city. The respiteless struggle for existence was typified not merely in the shouting, hurrying, yet withal good-natured river of humanity, but by the raucous voices of shop- and stall-keepers bellowing for custom along the way. In the frontless shops that squeezed in the streets unbrokenly on either side for furlong after furlong, all the wares of China were displayed in constantly recurring sameness, a hundred competitors in every line. If Kingtehchen differed at all from a thousand other cities of China in the things it offered repeatedly for sale along its narrow, slippery, flagstoned main street, it was in the greater prevalence of shops stacked to the ceiling with porcelain dishes of every Chinese-used species. It was a far cry indeed from this sweating, naked-to-the-waist maelstrom to that placid Western mountain-top city of Kuling, barely a hundred miles westward as the airplane flies.

Pastor Tsen of the American Episcopal Church took me in. His church-dwelling faced the main street, its lower front given over to shops differing not at all from the thousands of others packed unbrokenly away on either side of it. Kingtehchen's only foreigner, the French priest of the rival mission, was away on a long journey through his country parishes. Pastor Tsen spoke English as if he had been educated abroad instead of merely in Shanghai, and my note of introduction could not have won me a heartier welcome even from a fellow-countryman. To be sure, the pastor lived in purely Chinese fashion, like the overwhelming majority of native missionaries, except that no wine graced his chop-stick meals and his wife and daughters were not required to withdraw from the view of a male guest. My cot and bedding were as essential here as at any wayside inn, for the beds of Tsen Moosa were the same benches of split bamboo on four whole bamboo legs, colored a rich mahogany hue with much use, that are in vogue in all the region of the lower Yang Tze. Nor were the less-used

corners of his church-dwelling any less thick in dust than the shops and home of his still idolatrous countrymen; for though our missionaries may instil their rituals, their personal morals, and their faith, at least superficially, sometimes even their language in these leaders among their converts, they imbue them little or not at all with Western notions of comfort.

Though they have survived many a far longer journey without mishap, those four days on the hot flagstones of Kiangsi Province had left my summer-softened feet with no fewer than twelve blisters of varying size; as rickshaws are not allowed in the streets of the porcelain city until four in the afternoon, for a reason that shall presently appear, and chairs are rarely available, my journeying through the equally flagstoned town which Pastor Tsen and I soon set out to inspect lacked something both in dignity and comfort. Every street was as narrow and almost as great a chaos of screeching hand-barrows, shrieking carriers, and endless seething of pedestrians as the main thoroughfare. Carriers of wood, of "biscuit," of finished porcelain, of everything produced or consumed in this part of China, made our progress a constant struggle. No wonder our Shanghai consulate requires a certificate of disinfection on all Kingtehchen ware destined for the United States; the whole town was as utterly crapulous as any I had seen in China; no one, nothing, could really be called clean. The stench of human excrement, of never-washed people living in sty-like dens, the mangy scalps and ulcerated skins, and all the other filth-diseases with which China, particularly its southern half, swarms, were everywhere. As almost every one, the fair sex above the foot-binding age only excepted, was naked to the waist, the community ailments were of course more in evidence than in our own more circumspectly dressed society. Utterly ignorant of the most elementary rules of hygiene, they lived in hot dens succeeding one another endlessly along the narrow streets, with no breathing-space anywhere even by day, and by night their hovels as tightly closed in any weather as mud bricks and crude carpentering can make them.

Yet Kingtehchen is considered very well to do as Chinese cities go, and is indeed without much poverty in the Chinese sense, with no beggars whatever. The reason is that the city is one vast porcelain factory, and those who are not engaged in making porcelain are in some direct or indirect way getting their livelihood from it. According to Pastor Tsen, at least 80 per cent of the estimated 300,000 inhabitants of this ancient town, stretching five miles along the river and three



miles deep, work in some form for the chief local industry. There are about two thousand porcelain manufactories, though that does not mean what it would in the Western world. China is still in the hand and family stage of production, and many of the "factories" consist of a single household laboring in its own miserable dwelling-place. Every street displayed crockery in various stages of development; even in the largest potteries there are no modern machine processes, so that the smallest capital can compete. The few larger establishments in the Western sense of the word culminate in what were the Imperial Potteries before the revolution, now the Yao Company, with much of its stock owned by Tuchun, governors, and other political and military powers. Most firms or families specialize in some stage of the process or certain forms of the product; here the entire profession is carried on within one establishment, where it was easier to study it than to run back and forth all about the jostling, shrieking, sweltering town.

Little as its name is known to the outside world, or even to China itself, Kingtehchen makes more porcelain than all the rest of the former Flowery Kingdom. There is one minor porcelain place in Hunan Province, and others of no great importance in various parts of the country; but when the real connoisseur thinks of Chinese porcelain he thinks of Kingtehchen, though he may not know in what part of China that town lies. As nearly as is locally known, the manufacture of porcelain began ten or twelve centuries ago, before the T'ang dynasty, more or less by accident. At first the Chinese made ordinary pottery, such as is to be found in the graves of many lost civilizations, and chanced upon the form to which it has developed to-day. Something between the two products is still used by the common people in all parts of China. For a long time the art centered in Tingchow, in Chihli Province, and when the Sung emperors fled before the Khutans early in the twelfth century, the potters fled with them and set up their kilns in what is now Kingtehchen. In those days it was called Changnanchen; but it is common to change place-names in China. The Chinese think that the art of porcelain-making reached its pinnacle during the latter half of the reign of K'ang Hsi, that of Yung Cheng, and the first half of the reign of Ch'ien Lung, that is, from 1690 to 1770; and the products of the Imperial Potteries of Kingtehchen are the royal porcelains of great collectors.

The polished manager of that ancient imperial establishment turned a score of his subordinates to work and set up for my benefit a magnificent display of its most ambitious products—splendid vases

as tall as himself, artistic, delicate examples of the many more in his shops and warehouses; even though Chinese prices in general are low, no mere wandering scribbler could have carried off any of the masterpieces of this chief factory of Kingtehchen. From it came nearly all the fine porcelain that is scattered about the world since the looting days of 1860 and of the Boxer uprising. Some of the best things in its warehouses are still marked "Made to Order for the Emperor," no one with money enough to buy them having appeared since the Manchus descended from unlimited wealth to beggary. Sung, Ming, and Ch'ing china, the despair of makers to-day, came from this squalid town on the Chang Kiang. Here were made the Ming wine-pots of Ch'ien Yao, in *blanc de Chine*, with a spout and handles formed of lizards with branching tails, Yung Cheng vases painted with the delicacy of miniatures by Wang Shih-mei, a celebrated artist of the Manchu dynasty, the decorations being Lao-tze in a flowing yellow robe under a pine-tree by dark greenish rocks. From here came "palace pieces" in which appear the five-toed dragon of imperial rank, in contrast to the four-clawed one of the common people; here were fashioned imperial-dragon-decorated, pear-shaped vases with crackled peacock-green glaze, the huge Ch'ien Lung plates, the thousand-flower motif in all sizes, gourd-shaped vases with that dull olive ground which the Chinese call tea-dust, bears trailing gourds with leaves, bats outlined in gold, Ch'ien Lung vessels with a foliate pattern incised in its pea-green ground, a bulbous Ch'ien Lung vase bearing a flaming carmine sun, white, blue, and carmine clouds, and at the foot waves of brilliant green breaking in white foam, one five-clawed dragon rising from the waves, another descending from the clouds. A K'ang Hsi jar, showing a resplendent white dragon molted in high relief on bright blue tumbling waves under a vitreous glaze, recalled a phase of Kingtehchen history. During the directorate of T'ang Ying, early in the eighteenth century, a subordinate officer in the imperial porcelain manufactory, named Yueh Hsuan, produced a porcelain made with vitreous ware as a model which secured transparency of color and enhanced brilliancy of ground; but though Emperor Yung Cheng admired the vitreous ware, he preferred the brilliancy of white porcelain, so that Yueh Hsuan did not make the reputation he hoped. Of the *bleu-de-roi*, the incredible ox-blood, and the other unbelievable colors to be seen in the museums of the once Forbidden City in Peking and in the finest foreign collections, Kingtehchen is the origin.

I am not writing a porcelain treatise, however, but a sketch of the lives of the people who make China's proudest material contribution to the world. The art prospered in Kingtehchen because the raw materials of porcelain are near at hand. Two kinds of clay are used—*chi-men* and *kao-lin*, the "bone" and the "flesh," as the Chinese call them. The "bone" is weather-crumbled rock, found on the surface; the "flesh" is hand-ground rock. A third kind of clay is also used for glaze, and of the other things that are essential, such as an unlimited supply of pine-wood, many are found in this vicinity. Some *kao-lin* is still had from the shore of Lake Poyang, near Nankang; we could look down from the lofty summit of the Lion's Leap upon the whitish-red spot in the reddish landscape from which it is taken, and see boats making their way across the lake with it. But the materials get farther and farther away, and now some of them come as far as four hundred *li*. "We got all the materials near-by until recently," said the manager of the former Imperial Potteries; but his "until recently" turned out to have a Chinese significance and meant until about two centuries ago.

The clay arrives at Kingtehchen in white or cream-colored bricks. These are wet and mixed in big vats into a dough, the "flesh" clay kneaded with the hands and feet, and this is placed in sheet-iron buckets. From these the potter takes a lump of the size needed for what he is making, slaps it upon his "wheel," gives this a whirl by means of a stick thrust into a hole, lays aside the stick, and sets to work. So great is the centrifugal force of the flat, round, whirling platform down in a kind of pit in which hang the potter's bare feet that he often has the vessel shaped with his hands, shaved smooth with a stick or some other simple implement, and ready for the kilns before it stops whirling. One might think the clay was alive, to see it come up into the desired shape under the expert hands of the potter; yet he is little more than a coolie, naked to the waist, paid a coolie's wages. The old fellow I photographed at his "wheel" in the ex-Imperial Potteries had not only sat before it all his life, but for generations, through his ancestors; for each trade in porcelain-making descends from father to son; and though the vase he was shaping was whirling rapidly when I took a time-exposure, so exact is the turn of the "wheel" that the picture shows absolutely no motion. A single belt could run many such "wheels," and otherwise lighten and hasten the work; but methods have been practically unchanged since the T'ang dynasty.

In the larger factories this work is done mainly in open sheds about courts, and as the dishes are shaped always by hand, they are set on boards—single large ones for large pieces, long narrow ones for whole rows of ordinary bowls and the like—and dried over the beams. When they have hardened a bit, the “biscuit,” as the white unbaked dishes are called, are glazed by dipping the small ones in a kind of liquid clay and by blowing the glaze upon the big ones with a cheaply made tin spraying-pan. Then comes what is perhaps the most amusing process of all, the carrying of the soft glazed “biscuit” to the kilns. There are more than a hundred of these in Kingtehchen, the former Imperial Potteries and a few other larger firms having their own, the rest doing kilning only for the hundreds of family “factories” that have no means of doing it for themselves. The carrier nonchalantly picks up two of the long narrow boards, the slightly sun-dried vessels sitting loosely upon and bulging over them and trots away, one board over each bare shoulder. Sometimes the unbaked dishes must be carried a long distance through the teeming, jostling streets, and the streets of Kingtehchen are no place for a nervous man to carry such loads. The most crowded parts of our down-town metropolis are completely vacant of passers-by compared with these, so that we may assume that the hundreds of half-naked fellows whose ancestral profession it is to carry “biscuit” to the kilns have developed into phlegmatic beings. Summer is the busy season in the porcelain industry, and few towns in China seem busier. The constant human maelstrom pouring through the narrow lanes flanked by incessant shops or “factories,” the constant trot, trot, trot of the carriers of wood, charcoal, round receptacles with pottery to be burned, food for the workers, loads of every description, most of them converging on the kilns, make this a task indeed. The “biscuit” carrier becomes incredibly expert in a few generations, miraculously dodging mishaps by deft, experienced manipulation, lifting the front end of one board and hastily lowering the other simultaneously at the very moment you are sure he is going to meet disaster on both sides. It used to be a favorite trick of “biscuit” carriers to run into a rich man, such as a foreigner; for as all the sympathies of Kingtehchen are with the porcelain-makers, the mishap could be charged to the stranger and he made to pay as much for the unbaked “biscuit,” really of no great value yet, as they would be worth when successfully finished, and the chances of success all through the process are so low that it was a definite gain to get the price at once. But even China has progressed a bit in some things, and this trick is now rare, though

real accidents still occur. It is because of the barrier they present to the carrying of "biscuit" that rickshaws are not allowed on the Kingtehchen streets until four in the afternoon; so far as comfort or speed go they might as well not appear at all.

Hundreds of coolies carrying two triangular loads of wood each on shoulder-poles, all "Hay haw! Hah hawing" after the fashion of burden-bearers in the Yang Tze provinces, fetch up with hundreds of their fellows at the entrances to the kilns. It takes a thousand coolie-loads of wood for one burning; a big kiln uses a hundred and fifty thousand pounds a day—everything is measured by weight, even to the carrying and the taxing of porcelain; and the wood must be pine. The wood radius for a hundred miles around is constantly exploited, and as the forests are denuded, the source of supply gets farther and farther away, until now the wood comes by boat from far off and is so precious that the Kingtehchen people are fined if they burn pine for domestic purposes. Indeed it is planted, in rotation, in the hills round about, so that the city, though utterly devoid of green itself, lies among green hills and presents one of the few cases of Chinese foresight to make up for their destructive forest methods. There is plenty of coal not far away, but not only is the old superstition against digging in the ground still strong in this unmodernized region, but coal turns porcelain yellow. So dawn finds these hundreds of wood-carriers trotting up from the river to the kilns with their triangular frames of split bamboo packed with pine of stove-wood length, getting a stick with a character on it as a tally for each load, and dusk finds them still shouting their way through the teeming streets.

Most of the kilns are about fifty by twelve feet, with an arched roof about eight feet high in the center, rather rambling structures crudely made of Chinese bricks without much perfection in the use of mortar. All articles before burning must be put in porous, fire-proof, cylindrical containers large enough so that the wares do not touch the sides. When the kilns are stone-cold men go inside and pile these containers, with which other hundreds of coolies trot to the mouth of the furnaces, one atop the other from earth floor to ceiling throughout the whole length and breadth of the kiln, except for a small space left for the wood fire. Often as many as six hundred columns of them are set up before the place is bricked up, leaving only a two-by-three-foot hole into which the wood is thrown with a prodigality hardly known elsewhere in China. The pine burns fiercely, with a terrific heat, and fairly eats up a forest before one's eyes. The average burning lasts

thirty-six hours, and after about sixty of them in a year the kiln is rebuilt. The wood-feeders are ordinary coolies, but the kiln-boss is of high caste in the working world; like a pilot he does not sleep during his turn of duty, but after the burning he goes home and rests for the several days it takes to empty the kiln and let it cool off enough to fill it again. His methods are primitive but fairly effective, like so many in China. To find whether the heat is right, for instance, he spits in the hole by which the wood is thrown in, and if the sputum bounds back at him in a little ball like a tuft of cotton he is satisfied.

It may be that his methods are not so effective as an efficiency expert could promise, for on the average one third of the product is ruined in the burning. Millions of vessels of all sizes and descriptions melt together in the course of a year in the kilns of Kingtehchen and must be thrown out. Sometimes the whole burning goes wrong, which means a loss of three or four thousand "Mex" dollars, a serious one in such a land as China. The Chinese, by the way, have never learned to make cups or other things with handles; if they do, the handles must be very light, or they bend the cup out of shape during the burning and destroy its symmetry. One cannot have the best Kingtehchen ware if one must have handles. Masses of badly burned porcelain are everywhere, for no provision has ever been made for this débris; there are great hills of it all over town and all along the river, the high bank of which is like an endless mosaic of the failures and breakages of past centuries. At most the brick-material containers can be used only two or three times before they must also be thrown out, and every dish must sit on a little round disk of clay, uncounted baked millions of which lie about the town. Everywhere is broken or spoiled pottery cast out like unsuccessful ideas, so that not only is the long waterfront made up almost wholly of cliffs, often twenty feet high, of ruined crockery, some of it fine things that stuck to the container in one spot or of which the colors ran, but every flood washes it down into the river and makes this almost unnavigable at low water. The river-bed is carpeted all the way down to where it flows into Poyang Lake with the débris of the kilns, especially the little round clay disks which move so easily. In fact Kingtehchen of to-day is built on the waste-heaps of centuries of porcelain-makers, so that one must dig through many feet of past disasters to get anywhere; house and compound walls, even foundations, are made chiefly of ruined pottery, and bits of bowls and spoons—also made of china in China—protrude everywhere from them. Though it is the second city of the province, outranked only by Nan-

chang the capital, Kingtehchen has no wall, perhaps because its movements would be too much hampered by one; but if it did have you may be sure it would be made mainly if not entirely of broken and irredeemable porcelain.

Unlike the rest of the former Flowery Kingdom there are no menders of broken china in Kingtehchen. Elsewhere even the bowl or plate or lamp-shade that is broken into a score of pieces can be patched by a man who wanders the streets making his distinctive noise and sits down at the gate from which he is called, to bore rows of holes on either side of the cracks, with the pre-Homeric bit run by a string wound round it which the Chinese still use, and insert little brass rivets, so that only by looking at the off side can you see that the thing is more than cracked. His charges are absurdly low, and missionaries or other foreigners of limited means who have spent much of their lives in China are likely to have more mended dishes than whole ones, especially those foreign pieces which it is not easy to replace, some of them like successfully solved and riveted picture-puzzles. The chinamender cannot make a living in Kingtehchen. Not only are great quantities of china ruined entirely in the kilns, but much of it comes out imperfect but still salable, and vessels which lack a little in symmetry, that do not fit snugly together, or are otherwise imperfect to the expert Chinese eye are piled to the ceiling in many columns in the shops along Kingtehchen's principal streets, where to any but a foreigner or other simple Simon they are sold at much less than a song. Any one else knows that these endless columns of striking-looking china flaring from the open shops are poor stuff; the good ware is kept inside out of sight and danger and is shown only to those who give evidence of really knowing good from bad. The establishment of Kuling was a godsend to Kingtehchen, for it gave the peddlers who now swarm over the mountain-top retreat a large and convenient market for these imperfect cast-offs at the prices—to foreigners—of good ware. At the Yang Tze port at the mouth of Poyang Lake even street-stalls offer to unwary tourists what has become widely known as "Kiukiang ware."

When the china has been removed from the kiln, there remains the important process of decorating it. One of the reasons for the comparative prosperity of Kingtehchen and the absence of mendicants there is that the porcelain industry can use all kinds of workmen, of women and children for that matter, from the blind and the legless at a

few coppers a day to the finished artist at what a street-cleaner with us would call almost good wages. The job of "grinding the colors" absorbs many of the imperfects. They sit in rows, usually four or five of them on one side of a wide-open shop given also to other forms of commerce, and crush rock-crystals soaking in water in mortars like large stone wash-basins with a heavy pestle fastened at the top. Obviously it needs neither eyes nor legs to do that, any more than it needs arms or sight to run a treadmill from dawn to dark years on end in the dough-kneading part of porcelain-making. Many chemicals are used in the decorating, but most of the colors are ground minerals, sometimes chemically put together. There is arsenic, of course, and gold in gilded crockery; the famous ox-blood color comes mainly from copper, which also gives green; there is Yünnan blue from a rock furnished by the Miao tribes of that province; iron-ore gives another tint; pewter makes yellow; lead gives white. Most of the colors seem to come from southwest China in the forms of rocks and minerals, so that "grinding the colors" is one of the important occupations of Kingtehchen.

Starting as children, the decorators who paint the porcelain between first and second burning become experts early in life, but they are marvelous copiers from memory, rather than creative artists, reproducing without a model intricate patterns over and over again almost as exactly as it could be done by the machine process, and of course much better. That is largely symbolical of Chinese civilization as a whole: it reached its prime centuries ago; to-day it is static, and while the artist's patience, industry, and pride in workmanship remain, are perhaps increased, the creative faculty has atrophied under centuries of fixed models. One never ceases to marvel at the expertness with which even very youthful painters reproduce the best of the old things. There are a few real artists in the milder sense, too, some earning ten "Mex" dollars a day; but the ordinary china-painter gets fifty cents and his food, and even the artists look and live worse than our coal-heavers—but, then, so do those in the Western world now. They begin as boys and often sit in the same spot all their lives, even eating their rice over their work-bench and perhaps sleeping on the ground under it—how could they be creative artists? The decorating is done with a camel's-hair brush such as is used for Chinese writing, except the famous "rice pattern," which is made by digging small holes like rice-grains in varied designs in the "biscuit" and covering this with several glazes before it is burned—or burned again, for all the better porcelain



goes to the kilns once more after the painting. Two men or youths work together on the larger things, such as huge vases and porcelain figures like the "three graces" to be found on the divan shelf of so many better-to-do Chinese houses, and a deafening shout goes up if the simple stranger starts to touch the unbaked colors, which every townsman knows would be disastrous.

Though I saw one man who had come from Szechuan in his younger days and who with his son was now one of the best makers of those intricate religious figures, such as the starving monk, by which the Chinese set such store, Kingtehchen in general is a closed corporation. Had he not been especially artistic, foresighted, and diligent, even this man would not have broken into it. Absence of hotels and tight-closed guilds make it almost impossible for strangers to succeed; there is none of the Rotary-Kiwanis type of boosting in Chinese cities; they have already more people than they want. All China is represented in Kingtehchen, but it takes ten generations to become a native of the town. Others may be "naturalized" after they have been there for ten years by putting their names down at the yamen, now a part of the former Imperial Potteries, unless the old rule of Manchu days has succumbed to very recent changes. Apprentices work for six and more years, for wages at their best of forty coppers a day and, in these times of exorbitant prices even in the interior of China, as many "Mex" cents a day for food. Sleeping is no problem at all, for one of the bamboo cots of the lower Yang Tze region—I bought a new one myself for nine hundred "cash," say thirty-five American cents—can be set out anywhere, even in the narrow swarming streets, and one nice thing about being Chinese and cradled on a mother's back is that you can sleep anywhere at any time, undisturbed either by a hard bed or the uproar about you. A couch does not have to be downy and tucked away in a secluded spot to seem a proper resting-place to a people who are not spoiled in that respect as children. Hundreds of the men and youths of Kingtehchen sleep half naked in this August season on mere boards out in the streets, like corpses on a morgue slab, wholly undisturbed by the incessant traffic which splits or worms its way past somehow, after the good-natured Chinese custom; or they can lie down on the plank on which they sit by day and sleep serenely through any disturbance, and no factory or sanitary inspector will trouble them.

Most jobs descend from father to son, like any other precious heritage, and there are guilds or unions for every stage of the different

processes, from the carriers of wood to the semi-artist decorators. Some of the processes are more or less secret, if secrecy is possible in a land where privacy is unknown and chattering almost universal, and each group or guild may have a kind of patent. The workmen set their own hours, but they work very regularly, for pressure of competition and food prices well abreast of infinitesimal wages give no time for loafing even where there are no bosses or pace-makers. Most of the people of course are superstitious. Even with Pastor Tsen and a representative of the ex-Imperial Potteries to help, it took me half an hour to get a carrier of wood and one of "biscuit" in their fire-proof containers to pose together at the wooden ramp entrance to a kiln. At first I thought one or the other considered himself of too high caste to appear with the other, but finally a group that had darted into the shadows before I could catch them confided to me that no one cared to risk facing a kodak because a carrier who had let a foreigner take his picture two years ago had suffered from malaria ever since!

Lack of modern transportation and the burden of innumerable *likin* and tax stations are the great drawbacks to a still more prosperous Kingtehchen. Then, too, Europe now makes much porcelain, to say nothing of the counterfeiting of antiques in various parts of the world, and Japanese and other non-Chinese trash is in almost as great demand as the genuine, so that whatever creative genius may remain in the old porcelain center of China has hard sledding. In the dark and gloomy, but in mid-August agreeably cool, buildings that serve as assembling places, the Kingtehchen ware is wrapped in rice-straw and packed in boxes fit for the rough and tumble shipment to America and Europe. As the wrappers' guild happened to be on strike during the days I spent in the porcelain center, I had to coax a warehouse proprietor and a coolie of another calling to demonstrate before my kodak how it is done.

I spent the whole foot-sore day of my arrival running about with Tsen Moosa and by no means saw all that Kingtehchen has to offer even to one widely traveled in China. In the evening the pastor took me with his family to a Chinese feast at a restaurant out in the park of the land-side suburbs, where young bloods and the few who get wealthy making porcelain celebrate, evidently because he thought his humble style of living was not the proper way to treat a guest who had come all the way from America, and with a special letter of introduction, to see his unworthy adopted city. The waiters and many of the guests were naked to the waist, not because they were ladies in

evening garb, however, for unlike our own fancy restaurants there were none of the fair sex here until the pastor's wife arrived. A Chinese woman must be very modern or of the street-walker caste to appear in a public eating-place. Many of the men had breasts almost as prominent as those of the other sex; the Chinese male seems to pride himself on these. Our hats, of course, were not taken from us and held for ransom; even Chinese patience would not survive that provocation. The meal was all that a Chinese feast should be, from the toasted melon-seeds and shelled peanuts with which it began down to the last round of steaming wet towels; but I greatly missed a drink, not in the modern American sense but because after my roasting days even the night heat was stifling and ice is as unknown in Kingtehchen as palm-trees at the north pole, so that hot, or at best lukewarm, tea was the best to be had in a pastor's company. For that matter the bottled beer that stood in serried rows in the restaurant stock-room would have been even less inviting at that temperature. Uproarious hilarity came from the little rooms into which much of the restaurant, in Chinese high-class fashion, was divided. Our ride home in rickshaws quickly demonstrated that the rule forbidding them on Kingtehchen's rough and tumble streets until late afternoon is no great hardship to the riders. Though it was nearly midnight, scores of men and youths were painting porcelain by tiny flickering lamps, barbers digging out the ears and scraping the inside of the eyelids of half-naked clients, gaunt coolies trotting between loads of wood if not with boards of "biscuit," and hundreds were sleeping soundly as only the Chinese or the utterly exhausted can on bamboo bench-beds set out in the throng that constantly eddied about them. I fell asleep still thinking of the contrast between those endless lines of sweating coolies trotting on, day after day, year after year, century after century, under their incredible loads, that the world may have its porcelain, of the struggle for poor food and a plank to sleep on which goes on here endlessly, and of the thousands of people living in Western comfort up on Kuling only a hundred miles by air-line away, who spend their odd time wondering how to better the world and get its inhabitants to heaven.

It was almost pleasantly cool during my stroll along the high porcelain river-bank at sunrise next morning, but the deadly heat soon settled down again. Little children were making mud bowls and vases at the edge of the water, as those of Seville play at bull-fighting and

those of Germany practise the goose-step. A Chinese ambulance came hurrying in from a neighboring village; that is, a man completely wrapped in a blanket rode more or less easily between the legs of a bamboo bed turned upside down and fastened by another blanket to a single bamboo pole between the two jogging coolies, who moved exactly in step but no faster than they would have, had their load been wood or "biscuit." Another half-day gave me all I wanted of Kingtehchen and porcelain-making, and after telling some tales of foreign lands to a group for whom the pastor interpreted, the only reward he would accept for his hospitality, we went down to our boat. For rather than tramp back along the blistering trail to Lake Poyang, I preferred to let Liu beam with satisfaction at the chance of earning his seventy coppers and squeeze a day without any real work.

We had taken passage on one of the many small boats that go down the little river to Jaochow—pronounced as in "I had a *row* with *Joe*." The fare was one "Mex" dollar for a trip of about twenty-four hours without a stop, "berth" included, those who wished paying twenty Chinese cents a day for three meals, an expense to which Liu was put, since your Chinese servants always "find" themselves, at least in theory. There were nearly a dozen Chinese passengers, naked to the waist, as is the all but universal and not unjustifiable male summer costume in this region, and the "berths" were smooth narrow planks covering the hold of the boat and neither quite wide nor quite long enough for a normal man. The usual uproar before we started resulted in giving me room to open my cot, which was exactly the full amount of space allowed me, all my belongings going under it. The means of transportation were rowing, sailing, wading, pushing, poling, whistling and shrieking for wind, and towing at the end of a rope along the difficult bank—except that there was no sailing and mighty little rowing. Black smoke from the kiln-stacks rose above the porcelain town as long as we could see it, and when night came on the blazing kilns glowed against the sky like American steel-plants. The boatmen were as tireless as donkeys, and seemed to have about the same outlook on life, poling, wading, or pulling by night as well as by day, with rare pauses, now and again shooting some shallow rapid. But though they poled, waded, and pulled almost all the circuit of a bright full moon, it was not until three the next afternoon that we reached Jaochow.

Its waterfront was endless with boats, but not one of them even promised to start across the lake before noon next day, and at that their destination would be Nanchang, the provincial capital, which I



The china-painters of Kingtehchen begin as boys and sit in one spot all their working lives



Though he may become almost a real artist, the Kingtehchen porcelain-painter seldom earns an American dollar in a single day



The polished manager of the former Imperial Porcelain Factory stands beside one of its most ambitious products



Vessels that lack a bit of symmetry or are otherwise imperfect to the expert Chinese eye are sold very cheaply in the shops of crowded Kingtehehen

planned to see on another overland trip after cooling off again at Kuling. Luckily there was a mission compound in town, and the waterfront itself was not without interest. Long rows of little feet in their tiny triangular shoes stuck out behind the women kneeling on the shore end of the plank wash-boards on which they scrubbed their clothes with brushes, and men supplying the town with water came incessantly with two big buckets on shoulder-poles to dip them full in the midst of the washerwomen rather than go a bit out of their way for a less filthy supply. A boat with a dozen cormorants squatting on outrigger poles far out over the water came in from a day of fishing on the lake. The silly birds sat in dignified fashion, shaking their feathers and their loose baggy throats like a king in his dotage, yet diving if a fish passed within their ken and infallibly bringing it up in their beaks. The boatman, snatching them rudely out of the water by the heads or scooping up bird and all with a dip-net, threw the fish in with the rest of his catch, while the bird climbed back to its outrigger perch and took to shaking its feathers again with the usual fisherman's luck. Rings about their throats kept them from swallowing more of their catch than the boatman thought necessary, and all day long they worked for their master at no union hours for the few small fish he gives them when the day's work is done. The ways of picking up an existence in overcrowded China are legion, and a man in a round wooden tub paddled himself about the waterfront with two boards like small fans, retrieving any bit of floating wood or other rubbish in the dirty water, and scorning nothing in the way of alms, even the garbage of the rice-pots, which the boating population chose to toss him. It is the Chinese way to specialize in things by places, and not far up this same river much of China's ink is made from the soot gathered by burning the wood of a tree of the camphor family. Huge camphor-trees centuries old were the only remains of forests that once covered this region, and even they might not be there, grouped about temples as sacred things because of their venerable age and the tree-spirits that inhabit them, if they could be used in the kilns of Kingtehchen. Tobacco is the chief product of Jaochow district, and not long before a woman had been killed for stealing some of it.

It is never wise to trust a Chinese conveyance in the matter of time, and I was down on the waterfront again at ten next morning to preëempt place among scores of coolies on the midships of a launch that had promised to leave in the afternoon for Kiukiang. As usual the simple fellows took it for granted that a foreigner must have more

room than they and let me set up my cot with their invariable good nature. At noon the craft moved out into the stream, and we continued to drip in the broiling heat, packed together until we might have wiped one another's faces more easily than our own. About four in the afternoon a bullying official in a more or less white gown, carrying a fan and followed by several sycophantic assistants, came out to look things over, evidently for *likin* purposes, and at five we actually set out into the lake—towing three junks and soon picking up two more, each several times larger than the asthmatic little steam-launch that struggled away with them. Another reasonless delay was caused by a man with a bucket of whitewash who painted great characters on the smoke-blackened mats curved over the tops of the cargo that was piled as high as it possibly could be, even on the great high sterns and bows of the curious old vessels. The cargoes were almost all boxed porcelain, several of the biggest boxes consigned to a well-known firm in Chinatown, New York. When the five high caravels behind us began actually to move, many fire-crackers were exploded and a gong was beaten on each of the boats, and we were off down the river as the rice-bowls came out. For some Chinese reason the launch was considered preferable to the junks, which were also overrun with passengers, possibly because there was more likely to be level space enough on it to lie down, whereas one could only curl up like a street cur among the helter-skelter of boxes, but more likely because a passage on the launch itself assured that constant uproar of discordant noises without which the Chinese never seem to be happy.

The lake was shallow and the moon full, making a beautiful scene; with the five ancient craft in our wake one could almost let the imagination drift back to the days of Columbus or his forerunners as we chugged on more or less steadily all the bright night through, now and again breaking one of the tow-ropes of woven bamboo splints and enduring a great hubbub on launch and junks before it was replaced. Nowhere does the racial timidity of the Chinese show up more clearly than in their fear of wind on water, so that when it came on to blow a bit toward dawn we put into a bay where we lost more than half the morning. There was nothing to do but wrap myself in Celestial patience and wait also. Such of the childlike chatter of my fellow-passengers and the crew as I could catch had nothing to recommend it except its almost invariable good humor, in place of the efforts to prove belligerency and toughness of character which a similar situation and gathering would have produced in our own land. Liu managed my simple



cooking, consisting mainly of boiling duck-eggs—in this weather I had found that hens' eggs reminded me too much of my own dear land of cold storage—boiling and cooling my drinking-water, and setting out what were left of the simple supplies he had carried from Kuling. That of my fellow-passengers was done along with that of the crew, by a coolie who would not have known a garbage-heap from a ball-room, and distributed by a boy of twelve whose similar refuse-barrel qualities were increased by a constant semi-impertinent smile and a ring, made of three strands of copper wire, through his nose. This last feature only, in the eyes of his doting parents, proved him a pig and dispersed the attentions of the evil spirits that might otherwise have carried him off.

Toward noon we put off again but soon anchored once more near what seemed to be an island, and apparently the hours we spent in the little bay before a town were merely waiting for a fat ragged old fool who seemed to be an official and who came off at last with his disheveled bundles. As we rounded the point of land that forms the maidenly waist, as it were, of the lake, a rooster was slaughtered at the bow of the launch, and apparently on each junk behind, and the blood dripped over into the water to the accompaniment of many fire-crackers and the burning of much paper "money" and joss-sticks, all to win the favor of the spirits that often cause shipwreck here. This did not, of course, save the roosters from being served to the crew and passengers soon afterward. Lushan still stood capped in clouds when at length I saw it again, just a week after I had descended from it, and soon we were passing Nankang, but without stopping, which was a disappointment; for not only do I always prefer a new route, but we could have climbed home from there that evening. Finally the long train of boats slowed up among the raft villages of Ta-ku-t'ang and stopped for the night and perhaps longer to pay custom and *likin* dues, after which they would go on to Kiukiang at the mouth of the lake, pay *likin* again, and probably transfer the cargoes to larger junks or foreign steamers for the journey down the Yang Tze.

Distinctly as I recalled the hospitality of the lone foreigner of Ta-ku-t'ang and his insistent invitation to spend another night with him on my way back, I saw to it that Liu, in spite of a certain half-sensed reluctance on his part to take up his burden again so late in the day and perhaps lose another day's pay by finishing his job too soon, got under his load with all possible despatch, and we hurried away through the Augean single street of the well-watched town and out

across the causeway up into the hills. I had determined to make up for some of the exasperating delays of the boats by pushing on to my mountain-top home that night at whatever hour it might be; but luck was not with me. Twice we lost our way soon after dusk, and even when we found it again it was hard going. When we came to a mountain hut I told Liu that he might spend the night there and bring my things up in the morning, then struck out alone. The night was black with heavy clouds, the trail much given to splitting up into paths to lone hovels on half-inaccessible mountain-sides across more than half-impassable gullies or streams, and to cap the climax it came on to rain. A soaking would not have mattered if I could have been sure of not having to lie out unprotected on the mountain-side all night, but as it was I turned back, in spite of the loss of face which my reappearance at the hut naturally caused. There was a long projecting roof under which I could sleep without getting entirely soaked and still not have to spend the night with Liu and our host inside the tightly closed hut, and at dawn I left my bed as it lay, for Liu to bring up with the rest of the rear, and struck up the mountain again. The foreign-style stone mansions of the Chinese men of wealth who enjoy the comforts the foreigners have wrought here where their presence was so strenuously opposed three decades ago, and of those Chinese generals who, knowing the extreme reluctance any of their race have to attacking them where there would be any danger of injury to foreign lives or property, have built similar dwellings just outside the Kuling land-grant, where they keep a wife or two during the summer, as one leaves a hat or an umbrella in a train-seat to show that it is taken, at length began to show up through the trees and boulders above, and I went striding down through the Gap while it was still exclusively Chinese and marched in to breakfast just as my family was sitting down to it.

## CHAPTER VI

### OVERLAND TO FUKIEN

ON a morning of early September I descended again from Kuling, this time promising to rejoin my family elsewhere within two months, the bandits willing. The outstanding episode of my swift two hours down the mountain-side came when I heard a loud weeping at a corner of the stairway trail and looked into a hut past which thousands of foreigners go every summer, to see a mother rebinding the feet of a girl of ten or eleven, which had apparently been under treatment a year or two already. But though she was weeping copiously, the girl was making no effort to resist, which quickly killed my quixotic impulse to rush in and boot the old lady down the mountain. On a kind of peninsula among the waterways of Kiukiang is the station-head of one of those isolated bits of railway that lie scattered about China, and there I joined next morning the traveling-companions who had left Kuling behind me. It had been my extraordinary luck to find that two young American ladies—missionaries, yet not too much so; one of them a splendid cook and the other a physician of several years' wide experience, to mention only the most obvious of their outstanding qualities—werë going to their stations over in Fukien Province just in time to accept my protection—or was it the other way about? Let not the uninstructed reader conclude, however, that the journey was without chance of adventure because ladies dared undertake it; your modern American missionary girl in China can outdo in foolhardiness the most seasoned professional explorer.

As nearly a dozen missionaries, including their children, servants, and baggage, were returning to Nanchang, it had seemed best to hire a private car. When I say that the eight-hour journey cost me two "Mex" dollars only because the lady in charge had no change, it will be gathered that even our Presidents might afford a private car in China, though when I add that the third-class coach allotted us was by no means so comfortable, even with its hard wooden benches around the sides, as many a box-car I patronized in my young and unregenerate

hobo days, our new national tendency to economy may not be seriously influenced. To improve matters a servant had been sent down to disinfect it, which he had done by throwing a whole bottleful of the death-dealing liquid on floor, walls, seats, even the ceiling, which was no proof of wastefulness, to be sure, but which was not an unmitigated advantage to our clothing and belongings. Besides, there can be no privacy in China, even in a private car; not only did the trainmen make constant procession through our coach, but the struggle was constant to keep other passengers and even less inevitable station hangers-on from coming in to satisfy that perpetually burning Chinese curiosity, especially as the missionary atmosphere made it unseemly for me, the only foreign man on board, to follow my inclination and use physical arguments.

The flood that had left the plain, during the summer, almost a lake as far as we could see it from the mountain-top, with the railway on its raised dike like a thread across it, had largely subsided, and the population was at work again raising more rice with which to keep themselves alive until the next rice-raising time. Across the rich flat landscape stood to the end of the day's journey the ever bluer bulk of Lushan, high up on which we saw Kuling itself once, dimly and tiny, through a gorge down which a river I knew pitched headlong. The district, yellowish green with early autumn now, did not seem very crowded for China; here and yonder were ponds beautifully pink with blossomed lotuses; there a bit of cotton among the rice-fields; *shui-niu*—as the Chinese agree with us in calling the water-buffalo—were everywhere, children riding many of them. Nearly all day the train dragged along that eighty-five miles of Kiangsi's only railroad, and even then did not get us to Nanchang. The terminal station is on the sandy bank of the wide Kan River opposite the capital, and the train poured everything it had brought down into the crude boats struggling for place and custom along the cruder landing-place. A splendid breeze was blowing up-stream from the north, before which we were soon scooting across under a patched and makeshift but very effective sail, regretting we could not continue southward at once while speed was certain.

Nanchang is unusual among Chinese cities in that it has not been taken and looted for hundreds of years. There is much wealth, in the Celestial sense, and the eyes of military men in all that part of the country were turned covetously toward it and Kiangsi in general. Its good luck is partly due to its city wall, which dates from about two

centuries before Christ and, though occasionally repaired since then, has been just as it is to-day for six hundred years. Though the city is ten *li* across, and the wall is "20,700 feet and a few steps" long, as local statistics put it, it has but six gates, and is thirty feet high and twenty broad, with a moat ten feet wide and fifteen deep about it. Probably the greatest event in the history of Nanchang was the failure of the Taipings to get into it on their way down Poyang Lake in 1853 after destroying every other city in their path. They began their favorite sport of shooting firebrands over the wall, but these only started minor conflagrations because so many fell into the city's lake-ponds. Chinese historians tell us that more than eight hundred enemy boats arrived—no great number for southern China, and probably few of them were battle-ships—and anchored seven *li* down the river. One Judge Kiang headed the defense, and by night his soldiers would drop over the wall and kill rebels. Their motive seems to have been economic rather than patriotic, for any one who scaled the wall and was successful in combat with the enemy was to receive five hundred taels—in paper no doubt—for each victim. Naturally if a man was not successful there was nothing more to be said; besides, any one who survived dropping from that wall should have had little to fear from the Chinese weapons of those days. The Taipings outside began tunneling the wall. Judge Kiang ordered the buildings near it razed and used the materials to build an inner wall. Then he devised an instrument whereby he could detect at what points the wall was being tunneled; that is, I take it, whenever he could command sufficient silence to listen. One day a part of the wall was overthrown, but men and cannon were rushed to the breach, and the enemy did not get in. Governor Chang offered one tael for every large stone brought the repairers, and that evening all the people went to the temples of Wan Shou, the god of fire, and took two great idols up on the walls and worshiped them. In every opening in the crenelated top of the wall they put paper lanterns bearing the character "Shou" painted in red and so exposed that the enemy could see them. Shou is the chief local god of Nanchang, and the superstitions of the enemy were so strong that prisoners reported they had seen him sitting on top of the wall washing his feet in the city moat, a statement that sounded reasonable to those who knew that Chinese gods are no more fussy about the water they wash in than are their disciples.

But there are more tricks than that in waging Chinese warfare. One day the governor sent out some men bearing huge *tsao-hai*, those

straw sandals without which southern China cannot function on foot, and offered them for sale to the enemy. The foot-sore rebels, though only too glad to buy straw shoes, inquired why these were so large.

"Oh, if you do not wish to buy them," replied the venders, "we can find a ready sale for them in the city. You fellows are tiny, are n't you?"

"Do you mean to tell us," cried the astonished rebels, "that there are men who can wear sandals of that size?"

"Certainly," replied the venders. "If you don't want them there are hundreds of people within the city who can wear them."

That same day there appeared on the wall huge paper men so wonderfully made as to deceive the enemy, and the news spread through the rebel camp that it would be impossible to overcome such people. If only a few pairs of those *tsao-hai* had been left among the great bundles of sandals that Nanchang still offers for sale my subsequent travels might have been easier!

The siege lasted ninety-nine days, but though the wall was broken in several places and the enemy at times almost succeeded, protected by a smoke-screen, in scaling it, the city was never taken; to this day Judge Kiang and Governor Chang are the talk of the grateful people, who built them temples of honor.

There are five lakes within the city—not to mention several fine missionary compounds with schools, hospitals, and modern residences bulking high both in and outside the walls. Some of the lakes, though noisome mud swamps underneath, were great floating meadows of lotus-leaves, dotted pink now in the autumn blossoming season. We glided about them in a tea-boat, and in every little open space men fished with a net raised and lowered from a raft-borne cabin, as men do in every mud-hole, temporary or permanent, in China. Nanchang is peculiar, however, in that it does not depend entirely on the ponds and river for its water. In a corner of one of the narrow old streets is a famous city well, the granite curbing of which is worn in notches three or more inches deep by the ropes of the constant stream of coolies who have filled their buckets here for centuries.

Shoe-string, Chop-stick, Silversmith Streets are rightly named; most important of all is Wash-horse Street, named—though there are other accounts of the origin of *Si Ma Chi*—after a man who used to wash an official's horse. Away back in the Han dynasty, when this *Si Ma Kwan*, or Wash-horse Official, who rejoiced in the common name of Li, did his daily duty by Kwan Ying's steed in a pool here,

he little thought he was thereby to name the most important street in Nanchang, indeed in all Kiangsi Province.

It was hot in Nanchang in mid-September, and men of the better class held fans over their shingly shaven heads whenever they emerged from the sunless narrow streets; it is curious that the Chinese, who, now that the cue is out of fashion, seem to like a hairless head, rarely go bald, while Westerners, who hate a hairless head, so often do. Their women, less mobile in bound feet but with hirsute protection against the cloudless sunshine, sat placidly in the wheelbarrows in which they sometimes followed their masters. There are stone pillars along the sides of a stone bridge in Nanchang which, it is said, will infallibly bring male offspring to any woman who will come there alone in the dead of night with nothing on but an easily opened gown, and embrace one of them. A similar assurance prevails in not a few temples and monasteries about China, and curiously enough there are sturdy young priests and monks with very contented faces in all of them. Symbolical spears and swords of wood dating from ancient days, before shops where British-American cigarettes are now the chief stock in trade, are among the amusing contrasts in the Kiangsi capital. Open-air restaurants filled with open-mouthed crowds, makers of fire-crackers in shallow frontless shops—fire-crackers, by the way, are red because that is the Chinese color for happiness—small bamboos made into pipes by digging a hole in the root while you wait, very narrow but right-angled streets filled with constantly jostling throngs, are among my chief memories of Nanchang.

For all its unlooted wealth, there is no lack of poverty. A public rice-kitchen established generations ago still distributes food from the public granaries each winter, the rice-line being often so long that the hungry are passed through runways like those of our stock-yards. Though the history of Chinese public charities, where they exist, is mainly a story of graft and squeeze, an orphanage just off Chop-stick Street seems to be an exception. It is supported from an endowment, eked out with public taxes. Formerly each shop in the city was taxed six "cash" annually for the orphanage. When a child is placed in it, two tattoo marks are made on its ear, the date of birth and parentage carefully recorded; and a band of cotton cloth is stamped and numbered and then cut in two, one piece being placed around the child's neck and the other filed in the archives. A woman wishing to serve one of these babies is required to produce a guarantor and prove she can nourish it properly. The orphanage sends an inspector to verify her

statements, particularly about place of residence and ancestral home, for women have been known to take children from the orphanage, tattoo the ears of their own babies, and discard the real orphans. Every month the child must be brought to the orphanage for inspection, and if all is well the foster-mother receives her fee. A poor mother may take her own child to the orphanage, have it registered and its ears tattooed, and swearing the usual oaths and furnishing the usual guarantees, may then take the child home again and get paid for taking care of it. If well-to-do parents place their babies in the orphanage on pretense of poverty, the punishment is almost as great as for replacing the real orphan with one's own child.

Speaking of orphans, Nanchang should be of special interest to Americans because Ida Khan lives there. She was one of two girls picked up from a garbage-heap about half a century ago by an American missionary woman who still lives with her, under the name of "mother." The two were sent to the University of Michigan and were the first Chinese women to be graduated in medicine there. One now has a hospital in Shanghai, and no one who sees it or the one at Nanchang of which her "sister" is the matronly and highly efficient head and mainspring believes so strongly in the wisdom of throwing away girl babies. The venerable missionary lady also picked out and educated some boys, but if one may judge from appearances her choice of male material or training was not quite so good; perhaps in China boys have more to contend with than girls, who have nothing to lose and everything to gain.

At the time of my visit Nanchang and the province were ruled by an old scalawag named Tsai, whose duties as Tuchun were to keep southern troops out of Kiangsi and to deposit as much money as possible to the credit of Tsao Kun and himself in a British bank prominent in the concessions. It is he who is credited with reopening the poppy recrudescence while governor of Suiyuan in 1917, two years after its virtually total suppression, when he made a fortune by supplying Peking with cheap opium. His troops filled the campus of what was to have been the University of Nanchang, as well as many other badly needed schools and semi-public buildings. Two students and a silversmith, the former antichristian leaders and the latter a Christian, or at least the husband of one, attempted to form a party with the avowed intention of driving out all Tuchuns. It would no doubt have been a great improvement in China, until something worse took their place, but unfortunately the conspirators were taken and sentenced



to be shot. An American Y.M.C.A. man went to see Tuchun Tsai, and speaking most gently and tactfully, disclaiming any desire whatever to mix in local politics, but . . . In short, he saved the men's lives merely by letting the authorities know he knew what was going on. Peking has sent several civil governors to Nanchang, but they are always met at Kiukiang or somewhere else along the way by a "welcoming committee," and they have invariably decided to come no farther. It is not hard for any one knowing something of the Chinese to picture what takes place,—extreme formalities on both sides among the coming and the "welcoming" party, a chariness on the part of the new civil governor to partake of food or drink offered by the "welcomers," even while he and they are exchanging the overdone courtesies of Chinese official intercourse, the gentle roundabout hint that the new-comer does not care whether he proceeds to Nanchang or not, since the Tuchun is governing it so well, but with a query as to how he can live without a job or pay all the expense he has incurred in winning this place and coming down to occupy it—terminating with the assurance that he need not worry himself on that score, and perhaps a little of the assurance in cash, with which he returns home or goes into temporary or permanent retirement in Shanghai or some other healthful place and lives on his "earnings"—until the day soon comes when the payments cease or another "civil governor" is sent down to go through the same melodrama.

Fate was good to me in Nanchang, for not only was the feast of the great god Shou at its height during my one full day there, but my last evening was enlightened by the best fire I saw in China. The god in the Nanchang Temple of Fire is much worshiped, but little more than the artistic carved-stone façade of that famous old sanctuary remained just then from a very recent fire, two recent fires, in fact, for barely had a part been restored than the element over which the god is reputed to rule dehousing him again. The priests explained very cleverly that a council of the gods had decided to burn the city for its sins—chief among them no doubt the paucity of the priestly incomes—but that when they asked Wan Shou, the local god and a former governor of the province under the name of Shou Ching-yang, now duly credited with miraculous birth and all the fixings, to spare the city, he offered to let his own temple be burned instead. So they were holding a great festival in his honor in what was left of the building, and crowds of wild-haired countrymen with wondering eyes and many pigtailed overran not only the interior of the ruined temple it-

self but all the town, until one could hardly move in the streets near it, and people were still pouring down from the mountains and arriving from several directions by boats. The well in or near this temple is said to rise and fall with the river—one priestly statement which it is not hard to believe—and Governor Shou put an iron pillar in it and thus confined the demon who would destroy the city—until an iron flower blooms and releases him. The god himself had already been remade, a much-decorated, life-size official with a painted face as gaudy as a Chinese actor's, his mud-built body covered with "gold" and a riot of gorgeous colors.

I was just turning in toward midnight with all arrangements made to start south early next morning when a glow in the sky, followed by excitement in the streets, called my attention to one of the fires so frequent in Nanchang. In Peking and the mud-brick north in general one rarely saw a fire department, even where they exist, but in the south, where more wood is used in construction, fire risks are heavy. Nanchang being almost on the shores of Lake Poyang, the banks or at least the tributaries of which have not yet all suffered the common Chinese fate of complete deforestation, more wood is probably used in its construction than in even the average of southern cities. Gambling gets exciting, some one lights a cigarette and carelessly throws away a match or the end of a brown paper spill, or blows out the residue of a water-pipe, and the dry bamboo beams and rafters begin to crackle. The whole town is broken up by fire-walls with small arched gateways over the streets, and these act as drafts, so that Nanchang's fires are roaring and picturesque affairs. Men scared half out of their wits were fleeing through the narrow streets carrying their chests and their babies—at least their precious boys; women hobbled past on their crippled feet; children waked out of sleep were whining or weeping as they were dragged along; coolies leisurely jogged away under the loads of excited merchants noisily urging them on, all making a veritable stream against which we made our way to the roaring and glaring scene with difficulty. The "fire department" was fighting its way as best it could in the same direction as we, with queer apparatus, such as wooden and collapsible canvas tubs, which coolies filled with dirty water from the lake-lotus-ponds five or six blocks away, moving as leisurely as if they were flooding a rice-field. Pumps worked by hand lifted the water, which of itself must have ruined anything it touched, out of the tubs, but seldom to the fire. Shrieking men on adjoining buildings were feverishly tearing them down—once a fire

breaks out in Nanchang there is no hope of saving anything within that one fire-wall; the effort is to keep it from spreading to other subdivisions. The rattle and shouts of long rows of "firemen" with makeshift helmets and lighted paper lanterns—as if the fire itself were not light enough; the shooting of fire-crackers to appease the fire-god; childish soldiers and the local police flourishing naked bayonets in the darkest of the crowded, hurrying, narrow streets—the excitement lasted well into the night. But Nanchang has been burning down frequently for thousands of years, and so the fire-fighting was fairly efficient for all the apparent pandemonium; when morning came there was nothing but a charred hollow in the center of the town and an acrid smell of burned things in the air.

A long trot through narrow, crowded streets brought the coolies who had solemnly promised to come for our belongings at dawn to our boats on the Fu, an easterly branch of the Kan that rises in a score of tributaries on the boundaries of the province and empties in Lake Poyang. This was an important part of the ancient overland route by which undecorated porcelain from Kingtehchen passed for centuries, to reappear as "Canton china" after the Cantonese had painted it to their own southern taste. The boatmen were all ready to start—except that with the arrival of ourselves and our personal baggage to prove that we were really going to start they had to go ashore and buy rice, and charcoal, and *tsai*, or vegetables, including red peppers, and see their families and their friends, whom they had had a week of waiting to do nothing but see, and to attend to various other business and excuses for delay—but we really cast off and poled out into the muddy stream before noon.

I found myself alone except for the two very respectful boatmen on a boat more than twice as large as the one on which I had come down from Kingtehchen with twelve Chinese passengers, roofed over with sliding curved mat coverings into a back "cabin" and a huge living-room or whatever I chose to make it, with room enough underneath the loosely laid deck-boards for a dozen wardrobe-trunks instead of my less than two coolie-load bundles. I made sure first of all that this large hold was not filled with cargo, for it is a favorite trick of your Chinese boat- or cartman to load up with valuable goods, such as opium, and get through without examination or paying *likin*, on the ground that the stuff belongs to the foreigner. Then I put up my cot in the back "cabin" and sat down in the very comfortable steamer-

chair which was the craft's only furnishing, except, of course, the little earthenware cooking-pot forward. The boats had been waiting for a week, for the extra consideration of two "Mex" dollars each, and an officially stamped sign in English and Chinese hung at the bow of each, warning all who could read that it had been hired by foreigners and that soldiers must not commandeer it. The trip itself, which might last from four to ten days, was to cost me ten such dollars, including rice if I demanded it, as all ships are expected to furnish their passengers food, though the fact that we rarely demand it is another of the reasons why Chinese boatmen like to carry foreigners. For all the luxuries of a private yacht—except the certainty of striking my head on the low roof every time I rose hastily—this did not seem exorbitant.

Save for appearance' sake we might all have gone in one boat, but Mrs. Grundy of the squinted eyes is even more vituperative than her sister of the West, and missionaries who hope to keep their standing and get results among the Chinese must be doubly careful not to give wagging tongues any excuse for functioning. So the ladies had a similar boat for themselves and their "boy" and three boatmen, and even at that had plenty of room. It seemed to be quite all right for them to live on the same boat with four Chinese men; scandal applied only to a foreigner. Being young, they insisted on showing their hardihood and going "Chinese," that is, sleeping on the soft side of the floor-boards in their "cabin" aft, about which they put up their own curtains; but I am too old a campaigner not to know the foolishness of doing without a folding cot in a land where carrying one is so simple. The ladies flew at their masthead a large American flag, made in China and consequently very short on stars, so that it was not merely our boats that made us feel of the vintage of the thirteen colonies. I followed close in their wake, or at least my boatmen made every effort to do so, for they considered such a protection highly important in these times of bandits and their brother soldiers. When mealtimes came we ran the boats together for a moment, and I joined the ladies. Their "boy" himself was something of a cook, but compared to the young lady from Dakota who was off to her station for the first time after a year in the language-school at Nanking—but I must throttle my enthusiasm, for she is bent on sacrificing herself to the Chinese, and offers by mail would probably be actually unwelcome. How my mind harked back by contrast to grim days in other lands, utterly alone, carrying all I had on my own back, eating what I could forage along the way, sleeping on anything from a rock-pile up!

The breeze from the north continued, but it had lost much of its impetuosity, and I knew from lifelong experience it could not last long with me depending on it. But for the first two or three hours it was so strong that boats coming down the river had to pole and row and tow madly to make any progress, while we sailed serenely and noiselessly up-stream at six or seven miles an hour. The path along the river-bank was well traveled; among many others we passed two women in white shouting their way incessantly along it, a man in front howling now and then like a hungry coyote and one behind shaking a spear with rings on it, the few monotonous monosyllables of the women never ceasing while they remained in sight. It was another, probably vain, case of calling back the soul of some recently deceased male member of the family. Across the flat country, so green and tree-touched in contrast to the bare and treeless north, water-buffaloes marched at languid Chinese pace round and round big horizontal cogged wooden wheels running small sluiceways of an endless chain of small upright boards in a trough which brought up water for the thirsty rice-fields everywhere, creaking close to the banks, tiny on the far horizon.

We bowled along in the highest spirits until darkness forced us to tie up for the night; we had made nearly twelve miles, though not as the crow is reputed to fly. I could not see how the temptation to gossiping tongues was decreased by my taking another boat so long as the two were moored so tightly together that the scraping of one against the other kept one dreaming all night; but no living being, to my knowledge, has ever succeeded in getting Chinese boatmen to moor any other way or from stopping in the very midst of a howling mob of other craft, if they can possibly attain them before dark, preferably at the back of a city where all the sewage flows down upon one, so that they can dip up that kind of water for cooking and the few other purposes to which they put it. Luckily, our progress was so slow that we rarely reached a town, or even another cluster of boats, by nightfall.

The wind held fairly well on the second day also, but this, I am sure, was because the winding of the river made our course more east, west, and north than southerly, the spanking north breeze that had promised so well growing weak and languid or dying down entirely when the direction of the river would have made it useful and starting up again almost in fury whenever the stream headed us toward any other point of the compass. So we progressed mainly by poling and towing, and were not much farther south when night came on

again. I was under no delusion whatever as to the cause of this contrariety of winds, and freely confessed my fault. Sailing no doubt is a fine recreation, but as a means of getting somewhere, at least when I am on board, it has little to recommend it. There may be times when winds blow the way they are wanted; I have often read in novels and sea-yarns of "fair winds"; certainly every time I have taken a sailing-vessel in the hope of getting somewhere, from the time early in the century when I spent fifty-seven days crossing the Pacific down to the present moment, there has at best been a dead calm, and more likely still, a constant head wind.

There was nothing to be done but to content our souls in whatever Oriental patience we could extract from our Western temperaments, reflecting that this might be the only time in our lives when we would enjoy the luxuries of private yachts and unlimited leisure to read and write to our heart's content—or to play innocent card-games if we were missionary ladies—and add the extra days to our already long account with Father Time. What did it really matter? Is not hurrying a Western disease anyway? But it is not easily eradicated, so that I caught myself fretting before the second day was over, little suspecting that I might better save it for many other days to come. Once we could cast off that unreasonable eagerness to get somewhere else at reasonable speed, the trip was the most delightful one imaginable. We could take to the path along the shore when we wished; a still more pleasant way of passing the time was to get into our respective bathing-suits and step over the sides of our boats into the river, for the now very clear water was often not more than knee-deep and rarely indeed up to the lowest of our necks. We could swim in one spot for an hour or so and catch the boats without much effort, or we could stroll on ahead until we were tired of wading and sit submerged an hour, two hours, waiting for them to come crawling around some sandy point; or we could help pole or tow or, by getting off into the water with the boatman, whose amused astonishment at seeing ladies do so never ceased, do our share of pushing.

It was on the third day and in full summer dress that the doctor and I walked into one of the miserable little villages that crowded down every little way upon the shore. The first villager we saw was half blind, which awakened the doctor's interest, and she told him that as soon as our boats caught up she would treat his eyes. The word spread like a new fad, and in this little hamlet of perhaps a hundred people and as many gaunt yellow curs and thin pigs, we were quickly besieged



Scenery of southeastern China



A farm-house interior on the way up the Fu through Kiangsi Province



Several times on our languid journey up the Fu in Kiangsi we passed this shipment of American oil, on rafts less wind-borne than coolie-hauled



by eye-sufferers ranging all the way from those with mere irritations of the eyelids that in due time would be serious in this unclean, doctorless land to those blind from birth or with eyes all but rotted out with trachoma and its allies, all imploring for treatment in that smiling, patient, uncomplaining way of fatalistic China. Men in the cool depths of dirty shops hulling rice by stepping from dawn until after dark, year after year, on the end of heavy beams with a kind of wooden sledge-head on the other, do not need eyes for their work, but they too came out to add their cheerful pleadings. Wherever the foreigner appears in rural China a mob is sure to gather about him; when he offers to treat ailments, the throng of gaping faces that walls him in is limited only by the available population in the region. Some the doctor had to tell frankly there was no hope, and even these smiled their thanks; when the boat came up she made inroads on a scanty stock of argyrol, charging four coppers for enough for a week's treatment. This was much less than the cost of the medicine, but experience has taught the medical missionaries throughout China that to give anything outright to the Chinese—always suspicious and without any personal altruism to explain to them why a stranger, an outside barbarian from beyond the seas at that, should do anything for them if he were not making something out of it himself—is to have them throw it away as soon as the coast is clear. Perhaps some of these did; and even if they carried out the treatment explained to them, they were so devoid of any conception of what the doctor meant by using clean water and avoiding infection that only the kindness of nature could help much. It was a hopeless task, for every village could have monopolized the unbroken service of a doctor; and all the medicines we could have carried in a boat, were any such amount available, could easily have been used on a single day's stretch of the river. So the tender-hearted doctor preferred staying on board, or only wading along in the river, to going into the towns where her helplessness was emphasized.

Some of our languid days were whiled away with stories of the difficulties, amusing and otherwise, of the doctor and her station. Two or three years before, three American girls had opened a new mission station in the far interior of Fukien Province and started a school for girls. Girls' schools being unheard of in that part of the world, the people were sure it was a brothel in disguise; they were convinced of it when they heard that the girls were ordered to leave their windows open at night. The missionaries could not walk across the street with

a man, even with a male student, without being accused, or at least suspected, of immorality. One girl of the less poverty-stricken caste left the school suddenly, citing three grievances,—that she had to leave her windows open at night, make her own bed, and cease binding her feet.

On the other hand the youthful and attractive doctor reported that never in her two years in Fukien had she had a hint of an annoying advance from men; that seems to be one infliction from which Western women are virtually free in China. The difficulty was rather the other way. This very feminine physician and surgeon often had great difficulty in convincing Chinese women that she was of their sex, and had to assure them over and over again before they would allow the simplest examination. Her skirts, her big feet—I mean, of course, big in comparison with Chinese bound feet—her long hair done in a knot much as many Chinese men do their cues, her fearlessness and independent manner, even her size, that of a normal American woman, convinced them in spite of her voice—many Chinese men have high falsetto voices—that she was a man.

In the ancient isolated town where they were stationed, the North and the South were constantly contending, so that on one occasion the place had seven magistrates in two weeks. Finally one stuck, but like most of the others he had left all his wives behind like old garments. A friend recommended to him a girl resident in his new station, but she turned up at the yamen with a freckle on her chin, and though he allowed her to hang about, the disappointed magistrate “could not use her as a wife,” as he put it. Besides, he had decided that he needed an educated woman, one who could help him as well as attend to the affairs of his house; surely a surprising evidence of something akin to missionary influence! So he began coming to church. Every Sunday he paraded in with all his retinue to a front seat after services had begun, and all the congregation was in duty bound to rise *en masse*—even though in his ignorance of Christian ways, or with that lack of reverence common to Chinese temples, the magistrate happened in during prayer—and stand until he was seated. In spite of a pretense of secrecy, every one knew his real reason for church attendance, and it made the girls of the choir and congregation self-conscious. At length he announced his decision, that he would have the organist to wife. In most parts of China the girls are proud to be summoned to serve a general or a high official, whether as wife or less, even their mothers often going with them somewhat as servants, so that in

many places men in high position order girls from the government schools much like goods from a factory. The organist, however, with the moral support of the three foreign women, dared to refuse the magistrate, even when he told her that she could have the freckle-faced girl as a slave. So the magistrate looked them over again and, strangely enough, this time picked a widow. Stranger still she also refused him. So he had it announced in a roundabout way that after all what he needed was a tall woman of regal bearing, such as this miserable little town on which he was wasting his talents could not furnish.

Another magistrate already burdened with a freckled wife, thanks either to oversight at her choosing or to later developments, sent word that he would pay the missionaries if they would give her a medical education in their hospital until she could support herself and cease to be a burden to him. How I envied easy Chinese ways when I remembered that my own wife had brought back a row of freckles from a careless day under a Japanese sun! Later this same magistrate sent his "nurse," a kind of pill-peddler in uniform, to get some foreign medicine for his sore toe. The doctor sent back word that she would have to see the honorable toe itself before she could prescribe for it, and instead of making an appointment the great man marched in when every spot in the little mud-brick hut that served as hospital was full, even the two or three "private rooms," and the doctor had to look at his distinguished toe amid a milling crowd of his humble subjects. In the midst of the examination he remarked—for the Chinese do have nerves, though they keep them under better control than we:

"This crowd is terrible; I did not know it was like this. I must give you a bigger hospital! How much do you need to rent or build a proper one?"

"Ten or twenty thousand dollars," would have been the honest answer, but the doctor was afraid of scaring him off entirely, so she said modestly, still engrossed in the honorable toe:

"About four thousand."

"Oh, I don't mean a big building like that!" gasped the magistrate, all but upsetting the examination—and before he had left he had beaten her down, with the universal Chinese gift for bargaining, to a thousand dollars, whereupon he left saying that he would call a meeting of the gentry and ask them for it! They got it, too, but the mere thousand was of so little use by itself that it was laid away until more could be found to add to it.

We soon found there is something even slower than travel up-stream against a head wind. As the river grew more shallow in its upper reaches, we began more and more frequently to go aground, and while the boatmen shrieked and screamed at their bamboo poles, all of us except the caste-bound "boy" took our turn trying to supply some of the badly needed locomotion, hard work even with the light poles, varied by towing and wading. The water rushed by in a way to make us think we were making good speed—until one looked at the white stones on the bottom and saw them barely crawl from bow to stern during a dozen polings. So long as there was a hint of breeze from the north the boatmen made the day and much of the night hideous by whistling and screaming for wind; but if the wind came at all from the wrong direction, they must be very quiet lest they make it stronger. In poling they were constantly shrieking at the top of their lungs, using at least as much energy on that as on the actual poling; but it would have been as easy to get a New York shop-girl to give up paint and powder as to do away with this custom, for the boatmen of southern China are firmly convinced that unless they shriek when over-exerting themselves "our lungs will burst from the bad vapors imprisoned in them." We often came nearly bursting ours for another reason.

The same landscape dragged endlessly and sluggishly past. Great processions of land-travelers jogged along the path on the dike on one or the other shore, sometimes on both, the creaking wheelbarrows, even the hobbling women, much faster than we. Hours after passing some building prominent on a knoll it would still seem barely a stone's throw farther away. Often we gave up in disgust and waded on ahead of the boats, to loaf on the sand or in the lukewarm but sometimes rushing water until the crawling craft and supper-time overtook us again. Here and there great trees of the camphor variety, the most venerable of them with a little temple at their roots, where the pious put incense and other offerings for the beneficent spirits that inhabited them, broke the monotony of the flat landscape, dotted with countless water-slucices run by water-buffalo, cattle, occasionally by a blindfolded donkey, a sleepy boy or girl sitting on the crude cogged wheel and prodding on the languid animal that tramped forever around it. They lifted much of the water of the Fu into the rice-fields; they licked up the ponds that abound in all the rice-growing part of China; the country in every direction was punctuated with the mushroom thatch roofs under which the wheels turned. Blue ranges gradu-

ally grew up ahead where nothing but a straight low sky-line had been before, but still the broad, placid, shallow "river" stretched on in long sand-bars, the way through which was always a mystery until we came upon it.

During the early days of the trip we began to pass great rows of wooden casks, large as barrels, along the low shores, with men working about them. When I investigated I found they were half filled with leaves, twigs, and small branches of a bush, great fields of which, like meadows of willow-slips, stretched far and wide behind. They produce an indigo from which the dye of coolie cloth is made. No wonder blue is the favorite color among the Chinese masses when you merely have to soak a kind of underbrush in "stuff bought at the medicine-shop in town" to get it. The bushes are cut when in full leaf and soaked in the vats until the leaves soften and drop off. Then the stalks are removed, and to the liquid is added shell-lime which has been pounded under water in a stone mortar to the consistency of frozen cream. The amount of lime necessary is tested by tasting the mixture. For home-dyeing purposes cloth is dipped in this until it is of the desired shade of blue. Indigo for the market is obtained by pouring the mixture into a pit in the ground and letting the water soak away or evaporate, when the remaining paste is trotted to town in leaf-lined baskets. The men who worked about the casks had their hands and arms dyed a deep blue to well above the elbows.

The eggs to be had at almost any village for about two cents a dozen made the storage ones that pass as "strictly fresh" in our own exploited land vie with the ancient ones the Chinese consider a delicacy. When I ran across the fact, in a newspaper wrapped about one of my last purchases in Nanchang, that Japan had imported that year from Tsingtao alone about 232,000,000 Chinese eggs—at an average price of \$7.30 gold a thousand!—I was forced to the conclusion that it is not merely the human inhabitants of China who work diligently, and that the Chinese hen, nay, even her consort who so often plagues the sleeping-hours of the overland traveler, is useful in other ways than furnishing to wandering foreigners all the chicken they can consume. The mass of the Chinese do not often eat eggs, partly because even at two cents a dozen they are too expensive, mainly perhaps because only through the foreign residents are they learning that, like milk, butter, and cheese, they are fit for human consumption. America and Europe used to import millions of Chinese eggs also; more than once I have arisen from a hotel breakfast convinced that our own land

still does so; but if I am to believe my informative wrapping-paper, they have decided after many smelly experiences only to import them powdered, and vast quantities of them cross the oceans in that condition. While all this raises the price of eggs about the factories, the Chinese hen is so industrious that it seems to make little difference in the country as a whole.

We were by no means the only people fighting our way up the shallow Fu. Great strings of cargo-boats crept along behind us, with long lines of trackers bent double at the ends of the tow-ropes from the tops of the masts, utterly naked, or at most with ragged cloths about their loins, straining along the sand and the uneven places on the shore, crawling along the stinking backs of the towns, forever dragging their cumbersome craft slowly behind them. For days we were within sight of thirteen rafts loaded with American oil, surely a hundred naked men tugging at ropes fastened by a band like that of the Legion of Honor about their brown chests, or pushing at bamboos projecting at right angles from the unwieldy floats, over jagged rocks, through sloughs of offal, in water to their waists, working from the first peep of dawn until long after dark much harder than any American at home would think of asking a Ford tractor to work, to say nothing of a draft-animal, bit by bit toiling their way up country, yet merry as picnickers around their shore fires in their short evenings.

The fourth day was Sunday, but after a sunrise swim and two hours of gazing at an old pagoda ahead without getting visibly nearer it, we all three took to the shore, and finding walking not only faster but less nerve-racking than sitting helplessly on the windless boats, we struck off across the country for the first important place on our route, the ancient walled town of Fuchow. A duck-herder half led, half drove his quacking charges across the plain, through water or over land with perfect indifference, coaxing them along with peculiar noises or coercing them with a whip, such as that I had seen before, like a fishing-pole with a lash. One would think the quacking would get as much on his nerves as the "ba-a-a-ing" of sheep on those of the lone sheep-herder, but the average Chinese shows as little of nerves as of fatigue. Broad paddy-fields dotted with magnificent camphor-trees spread on either hand; the peasant houses, in little mutually protective clusters, had each a large barrack-like central room, and with their steep gables and their whitewashed wattles

between black beams outside they were mildly reminiscent of Nuremberg. Creaking water-wheels with sluices under their mushroom thatch roofs were everywhere; now and again we passed a grist-mill outwardly much the same in appearance—a mere roof of thatch on thin wooden pillars beneath the deep shade of which the half-naked miller squatted tailor fashion on the beam behind his ox or his amphibian *shui-niu* and rode round and round over an upright stone wheel running in a circular stone trough in which from time to time he threw a handful of grain.

We walked four hours, crossing a stream or two by clumsy row-boat ferries, dragging the doctor past loathsome forms of disease or injury that she could in no way have helped, and brought up at the mission compound of Fuchow, in a tight little corner of the city wall. It is a rare town of any size in China to-day that has not its foreign missionary, and in this case a Swiss and his wife, with two tow-headed boys showing the effects of isolation among the Chinese, were only too delighted to put the doctor to work in the ill-stocked little dispensary; though it was Sunday afternoon ailments poured in as long as the gateman was allowed to admit them. The discovery that the native pastor's wife was suffering with an ailment more common among ladies of the night would have been disheartening under normal circumstances, but being a mission doctor to the swarming hordes of interior China, where untended disease is as common as uncleanness, is hardly normal for American young ladies, and to let cynicism enter the soul would be a fatal mishap.

It was dusk before one of our boatmen came to say that our dawdling craft lay among the log rafts of the town, and in the meanwhile the foreigner who had got me my coolie for the King-tehchen trip, and who had left Nanchang only the morning before, had arrived by chair. In other words, it being only 180 *li* overland from the provincial capital to Fuchow and less than that from there to Kienchangfu, the goal of our boat journey, I might almost easily have walked to the latter place in the time it had taken us to get here. But what of the pleasures of the steamer-chair and my books, to say nothing of the banquets, intellectual and otherwise, in fitting companionship, the long afternoons in bathing-suits. . . In vain I cited all these advantages, for truly the soul of the West is impervious to the repose of the East.

We rallied our patience and took to the boats again; but though the boatmen were astir long before dawn and poled incessantly until

rice-eating time, when the sun was well up, we had made scarcely a mile, and the centuries-blackened wall of Fuchow and the huge Catholic church bulking high out of the town, like a giant knee-deep among pygmies, were still in the foreground of the picture. Such wind as there was blew head on, and the scrape of the boats on the stony river-bottom became the most familiar and the most exasperating of sounds. When the sun was low enough to make my afternoon pleasant, I stepped overboard and waded for fifteen minutes ahead of the boats—and had to wait an hour and a half before they overtook me! In short, all the toiling and urging of that day had brought us, when full darkness tied us up again, hardly twenty-five *li* from Fuchow, which is thrice as bad as if it had been miles. We had picked up an old man to help pole and to cough the night through, his son having been brought out to us badly burned, and the father remaining to show his gratitude for a treatment by adding his thin muscle to our struggles. Twice boat-loads of soldiers came off with one or more of their number badly in need of medical attention, so that the doctor was not spared even though she remained on board.

When the head wind proved stronger than ever next morning we decided that something simply must be done about it. We packed ready to go on by wheelbarrows or carriers when the boats caught us, and after breakfast the doctor and I were set ashore and struck out for a town fifteen *li* farther on, where we might possibly get some sort of land transportation for the long hundred *li* left to Kienchang. The boatmen saw us go under protest, for they assured us that the *bah feng*, the north wind of which they had been chattering incessantly for days, would put in an appearance at any moment now, but the mere mention of it had got on our nerves.

We found ourselves presently in Hsi-wan, a long sloppy town of no depth stretching two miles along the river-bank. There were carriers, but they quickly caught the fact, leisurely though we strove to be, that for some unfathomable foreign reason we were pressed for time, and set their demands accordingly. Wheelbarrow-men were somewhat more numerous, hence more inclined to be reasonable. Within an hour we had a sufficient number of them agreed to go on with us as soon as our boats came in, and to get us to Kienchang the following evening. This arranged, they almost instantly demanded more money, two thirds of it in advance, and refused to start until next day. That would have given us little certain advantage over our boats. We hurried to the magistrate's yamen. He and his cronies, commanding the northern troops that held the town, turned out to



be from Paotingfu, in Chihli Province, and my faulty Pekingese proved of more use than the doctor's fluent southern dialect. We were both invited to seats on the red-cushioned divan of his waiting-room and to partake of tea, though no Chinese woman would ever have been asked to enter the building, or have accepted. The magistrate was exceedingly courteous, doubly so when I maltreated some of his familiar tongue and proved that I had been in his unworthy home town. He was familiar with foreigners, he assured us, and knew their strange taste for haste. We could have all the men we wanted at once, no question whatever—as soon as they had eaten rice—carriers at that, who would be faster than wheelbarrows; and, after keeping us only an hour, he took from us three silver dollars to make the usual advance to bind the bargain. We might go to our dinner in perfect peace.

The boats crawled up at last to one of the holes between the buildings walling the waterfront; we hurried through a late, packed-up lunch, sweating at every pore—if such plain language may be used of charming young ladies—then made final arrangements to leave the boats. Four yamen runners having come to say four times that all was ready, we let the hired coolies take our belongings. They set them down on the earth floor of the corner shop nearest the pig-slide that served as landing-place. An hour passed amid the chaotic, meaningless shrieking that only the Chinese can do to perfection, without any hint as to what it was all about. We insisted that the agreement to start at once be carried out. An oily yamen runner assured us the men would go “in an instant,” as soon as they had eaten rice! Hubbub loud and long enough for the whole town to have done so from a single bowl ensued; then another yamen runner came to say, in that calm manner with which the Chinese ignore solemn promises, that we would start *ming-t'ien*—bright day, dawn, to-morrow—in other words the *mañana* of the South Americans, who have so much in common with the Celestials. We ordered the stuff carried back on board, in the voice that makes the Westerner so disconcerting to the languid East, and shoved off, scorning even to mention the three-dollar advance. The very wind took pity on us and actually blew from the north, with some degree of energy, for the hour or so that remained of daylight—and next morning, barely around a bend from Hsi-wan, we faced a strong south wind again!

The perfect gentleman of the fashion sheets will no doubt censure me for abandoning the ladies next day and striking out to finish on

foot the sixty *li* left. The act was not entirely selfish, however, for by going ahead I could have our overland caravan ready to start from Kienchang soon after our boats arrived, if ever, whereas if we all came in them, we should at least lose a full day organizing it. Though September was on the wane, the midday heat was still hellish. Sweat dripped constantly in huge drops on the flagstones broken with sand wading that made up the trail. It was a hilly green country now, rich as a market-garden, with cotton, indigo, beans, peanuts, rice growing everywhere, the paddy watered not only by the mushroom-roofed water-wheels which dotted the landscape but by treadmill sluices run by men and boys. The deep green of the vegetation and the many trees made all the scene so unlike dry, treeless northern China that it was hard to realize that this was the same land as brown Shantung and desert-broken Shensi. Women and children, the former sitting on little wooden stools, were digging peanuts in small hour-glass-shaped baskets, from which they filled others holding more than a bushel, with two of which on their shoulder-poles coolies trotted away. The persistency of this crop, throughout China, from the Great Wall to the southern coast, from the eastern tip of Shantung to the borders of Tibet, explains its several fold greater yield there than in our own land, the thousands of gallons of peanut-oil the country produces, to say nothing of the shelled and unshelled nuts that can be bought wherever any one sells anything. A generation ago the peanuts of China were the little dried-up, run-down ones that are still grown in a few places, but American missionaries introduced the fat Georgia goobers that now cover goodly portions of almost every province with their flat, pussly-like plants. Men, with here and there a woman helping, for all her crippled feet, were cutting the top, several inches deep, off the harvested peanut-fields and screening the earth as if it were gold-dust, leaving it in long rows of little grave-like mounds across the fields; it had something to do with their fertilization schemes.

The country people were very friendly. I stopped often for cold tea, bathed my feet in every limpid stream, above all took my time, for I could be certain that however slowly I walked the boats would not get there first. I was striding along a tree-lined dike with a wind blowing across it, so that, though the afternoon was still young, my sweat-drenched hours were being forgotten, when I spied on the brow of a hill ahead a pagoda, infallible indication of a town of importance. At its foot was the first of two ancient stone

bridges across the Fu, with twenty-three round arches and a bush-grown air of antiquity. The widened and now busy trail marched with a certain directness along the farther bank toward the companion bridge and the district town, ten *li* on, under the walls of which I at length brought up, a whole hundred miles southeast of the capital we had left so gaily eight days before, and that still without my baggage or companions.

The German missionary and his wife who welcomed me were the only foreigners in that region. By reason of the fall of the German mark and the poverty of the pious at home they faced the task of trying to run the town mission and many out-stations on twenty "Mex" dollars a year! The mission stood on the ruins of an older city, of which, in digging for buildings, they had found ancient canals and streets and evidences that this must have been a capital long before the Christian era, all fifteen meters below the present surface. It was delightful within the orchard-garden of the German, but the same old China began just outside his compound walls. Huge sows dragged their gaunt but overladen bellies on the slimy, uneven cobblestones, waddling their way through the streets with a manner ludicrously like the soldiers from the north who bullied the place; curs foraged for filth between the legs of passers-by, emitting their cowardly mongrel yelp almost before a kick could be aimed at them; pigs, curs, and soldiers roamed the hills just inside the rambling city wall, on top of which cattle and sheep grazed. Particularly on its southern side, the wall was heavily overgrown with grass and jungle, and there was the usual road entirely around the city close outside it, on which through traffic can avoid the often costly formalities at the city gates, or the threading of the crowded, narrow streets. Like many Chinese cities, the corners inside the wall were pasture-lands and cultivated fields, recalling Taiping destruction but useful in case of siege by an opposing army or by bandits. Outside the city a beautiful mountain landscape lay piled up on every hand, grave-stones that often evidenced great antiquity stretching far up the hillsides.

The doctor turned up at ten next morning, dusty and warm, having left the boats thirty *li* down-stream after breakfast. All day we waited, marveling that the Germans got their newspapers from Shanghai in a week, a mild rain adding to our gloom with a threat of hard going ahead, if not impossible roads. Plenty of coolies in Kienchang would have been only too glad of a job with foreigners,

but the militarists held hundreds of them on the chance of some day needing them, while all the town's boats were away in hiding for fear of being commandeered. The German had sent to the hills the evening I arrived for carriers less likely to be opium-smokers and impudent rascals, and before dark assurances came that twenty-five men would be ready at dawn. None of us took that word "dawn" seriously, but we might at least hope to be off before noon, if only those unmentionable boats would come. At dark three of us strolled back down the river, and by dint of much hallooing from our coolie we found our boats in midstream about a mile below the town. The third passenger was pickabacked ashore by the *lao-ban*, or boss boatman, nearly half her size, and he solemnly promised to make the remaining mile before morning.

For once they kept a promise, and soon after sunrise a procession of ourselves and our host, some of the coolies from the hills, and many of the people of the town, including a goodly number of impudent ragamuffin soldiers, might have been seen making its way across the ancient many-arched stone bridge connecting Kienchang with its transpontine suburb. There are traffic rules even in China; wheelbarrow-men must carry their vehicles across this bridge, though it is solid enough for a motor-truck. No doubt the rule has something to do with the confounding of evil spirits. Of the twenty-five coolies there were three for each of the ladies' chairs and for a full-sized wardrobe-trunk which the most recently arrived of my companions will not bring back with her if she returns to a mission-field in the far interior after her first seventh-year furlough. Of the rest I had load enough only for a man and a half, but an extra half-load of window-glass that the ladies were taking to their station obviated the necessity of cutting a coolie in two. The chaotic hubbub of unloading our boats, paying off the "boy" and the boatman, who of course shrieked for more "tea-money" than their diligence in anything but whistling for wind warranted, the arduous task of so dividing the baggage that each carrier would have about fifty pounds at each end of his shoulder-pole, and the constant interference of the friendly but curiosity-maddened crowd about us, kept us on the torrid river-bank most of the morning. At length we were ready for the 360 *li* across country which can be chaired, wheelbarrowed, or walked in four cobblestony days; as any of these methods are more reliable than waiting for wind, we had every prospect, if fair weather held, of really making this in the time set. In fact we were ready a dozen

times, and each time some new delay came up. A coolie had broken his carrying-pole and must get another; the three carriers for one of the chairs had either not come down from the hills or had fled back to them at sight of their perspiring burden; long uproarious wrangling took place at the attempt of the chief coolie to assign to three of his fellows the wardrobe-trunk; three coolies who did not even pretend not to smoke opium were gathered at one of the chair-*hongs* in the town, and the long vociferous bargaining with them must, of course, be followed by their disappearance for an hour or two with their advanced wages, on the pretext of leaving some of it with their families, though all concerned knew they had really gone to smoke opium; soldiers came for my card, in lieu of a passport, but did not ask the ladies for any, for naturally I had as much right to a pair of wives as to my queer foreign bedding; and when these and a hundred other excuses for delay had been overcome, the whole posse must drop their loads in the dirty street below which they had made them up and all trail off to "eat rice." Thus though many of the coolies had really gathered at dawn, it was high noon before our cavalcade was under way, all the narrow street of the transfluvial suburb gazing after us, urchins and beggars and cur dogs trailing among and behind us. The mere launching of a battle-ship is a pastime compared to getting a train of coolies off on a journey.

Once he is really started, however, the last rice-shop of his native town, the last relative's hovel, passed, the Chinese carrier will seldom give real cause for complaint, unless it be the unearthly hour at which he insists on rising and pushing onward. It is an ancient and honorable route in Chinese history, this overland trail from Kiangsi to Fukien, and doubly enticing now that rumors of bandits along it were frequent. The jog-trot of the *t'iao-fu*, or carriers by shoulder-pole, and the swift walk of the chairmen and those who carried in pairs or trios was just the pace that suited me, their halts just frequent enough to give me once or twice a day a dip in some cool, clear stream, to the envy of the ladies. Blue ranges lay in every direction across the hilly green country, endlessly appearing as we advanced, the magnificent old trees that seemed to be dreaming of pre-Manchu times, nay, even of the days before the Mings, the incessantly winding flagstone trail itself a pleasure which no straightforward one could have been, all reaffirmed an impression that one of the natural vagrant's greatest joys is to wander away across yet another un-

known land to somewhere else, known only as the infallibly erroneous imagination pictures it.

That night we slept in a church, though the Westerner snatched suddenly from home and set down there would not have recognized it as such. It was also a dwelling-house, with mud-brick rooms opening on a main chamber that was granary, junk-storehouse, pig-lodging, and chapel all in one, at a place called Hsiao Shih, Small Stones, if I heard the tones correctly. That curious Chinese lack of reverence for religious places makes a church no less available as a lodging than a temple, but its even greater contrast to a crowded, staring inn is frequently offset by the Christian converts, who are likely to be of lower caste than those responsible for the semi-care of a temple.

A sort of *esprit de corps* soon grows up in a train of Chinese coolies on a long journey, and quarreling or bickering words are as rare as surliness. The three opium-addicts from the town were more experienced chairmen than those from the hills, so that their other drawbacks were about neutralized. Even they had none of that impudence universal among the foreigner-spoiled coolies of Kuling. The only carrier who worked exclusively for me was a sturdy, uncomplaining fellow with a pigtail in a Psyche knot and with indefatigable legs, so that I was always assured of my bed when night called a halt. The wardrobe of each coolie consisted of four pieces, to wit: faded-blue cotton trousers of the voluminous seat affected by the Chinese of all classes and sexes, a long narrow strip of the same material floating like a summer scarf across the perspiring shoulders as a protection against the slipping of the pole and at the same time serving to mop the face, straw sandals, and mushroom-shaped hats of a split-bamboo framework filled in with large dry leaves and varying in size from mere saucers to veritable parasols. The sandals, seldom lasting more than two days even in dry weather, but for sale at every wayside shop, cost four coppers, the hats six, and a hundred coppers would easily cover the other garments; and these would rouse the average coolie to wrath, to be quickly followed by his effervescent cheerfulness, if they did not last him at least a year. The equivalent of an American dime seemed to supply him for a day in this unspoiled corner with his usual food, tea enough for his mild thirst, and the cost of lying by night on a mat-covered shelf of loose boards in wayside inns. Unless he had fallen victim to the opium habit, his only other regular expenditure was three or four coppers a day for corn-silky tobacco for the simple

little bamboo pipe he carried in his waist-band, since he could not thrust it in at the back of his neck while wearing no upper garment. Hence four days of carrying at as many "Mex" dollars, each exchanging then and there for almost two hundred coppers, left him a gentleman of means for some time to come, even though he might have to return "empty" to his home town.

There were times when I regretted the once execrated boat days. Every morning when the red sun appeared like a great ball on the edge of the horizon ready to roll across the earth we were on our way, and plodded on sometimes until after dark. The meandering trail, now and again unflagged for a space, to the relief of my lightly shod even if now hardened feet, crossed precarious bridges half in ruins, dipped down through smaller streams that could be risked without a bridge, occasionally brought up at a stream so large that the job of bridging it had been abandoned to a clumsy ferry-boat, requiring three or four trips to get our twenty-five coolies and their loads across, at a copper or two each. Much time, though no great amount of money, is squandered in taking a caravan across one of these typical centuries-old ferries where bridges are needed along important Chinese trails. At other times our cavalcade strung out for several *li*, in clusters, with varied spaces between them, depending on the unwieldiness of each load. Three or four youths, in the white garments of the leisure class that contrasted with the blue of the workers, had joined our party for protection on their return to a mission school from robbers and bandits of kidnapping tendencies. How fantastic it would seem if Americans journeying from Pittsburgh to Chicago had to wait until they could join for safety's sake a group of Chinese making the trip! But the East and the West have different points of view. Particularly as we neared the edge of the province, with no more cities to give inducement to road-building even as it is understood in southern China, the trail became terrific with tumbled cobblestones, so many of them missing that two steps of even height would have startled the senses, water draining down into them from some sluiceway broken or deliberately turned into the highway as the simplest means of carrying the water to the rice-fields into which the "road" dropped off abruptly on either side.

Terraced amphitheaters of rice-fields climbed the hillsides, the rich green now slightly touched with autumn yellow, here and there a new tower, as a lookout against the bandits who have grown worse during recent years than ever before in Chinese history, standing out against the mountains. A few threshing-boxes were still to be seen,

but the *thump! thump! thump!* of rice-heads seemed to be over for the season. Trees of the pine family were as numerous as they are rare in the north, and hundreds of them were used as supports for stacks of rice-straw, which were bunched several feet high about slender evergreens, as a protection against foraging animals or evil spirits, and the trail, incessantly wandering even through perfectly level rice-fields, was lined with tree-borne straw-stacks. Birds sang everywhere; groves gave splendid shade; but our coolies, though they were almost all countrymen, would have none of this hobnobbing with nature, and would hurry past all such delightful spots, content to stop only in the dirtiest corner of the towns, or, if these were far apart, under the pillar-held roofs straddling the trail at intervals. Two pole seats ran along either side of these, usually on the crest of a knoll where we had a full sweep of the wind—for now that we needed it no longer, the *bah feng*, the prevailing north wind of this time of the year, blew steadily day after day.

No Broadway rounder could have been more fearful than our carriers of beautiful solitude, or in a greater hurry to get back to urban contaminations, hubbub, and immunities. Our caravan stopped as naturally at certain towns as an old milk-wagon horse at the homes of customers, and would have been hurt and astounded if we had tried to drive them past. Particularly our midday meals, still concocted by the more newly arrived of my companions, with some minor assistance from the man who carried the immediate-food basket and the cooking-utensils, were always in full sight of a throng of villagers and fellow-travelers, who swept like a tidal wave up to the square table on which we dined, and then dropped back good-naturedly at our threatening but smiling gestures. For all their shape I take it that Chinese eyes have no corners, for the stare direct is universal. There is no people, so far as I have encountered the inhabitants of our insignificant speck in the solar system, that can approach the Chinese for frank display of childish curiosity. The Chinese who crowd about the foreigner at every visible static moment of his life in interior China are interested in the extraordinary shape and color of his eyes, the slightly off color of his face, trebly so in his hair, in the inexplicable fact that he keeps his mouth closed, that he uses a cloth for the nose, rather than his fingers and the nearest post or table-leg or sleeve, in his curious eating-implements, the strange foods he brings with him, though these may only be variations in cooking from their own, in the strange accent of his more or less mandarin speech, in his gestures, in his garments, from





The doctor could cross the most precarious bridges without exertion or the batting of an eyelid, though the same could not be said face to face with a water-buffalo



The doctor and I impressed upon our companion the unwisdom of bringing to the far interior of China baggage heavier than herself



The Fukien Min is so swift that on the larger cargo-boats the steersman is put high up on a platform and his mighty oar-rudder is weighted with a stone or a part of the cargo



In contrast to the mere mounds of earth in northern China elaborate horseshoe-shaped ones of stone or cement cover many a sloping hillside in the south

pith helmet to the leather or cloth shoes he wears in place of the woven-straw sandals, in his absurd insistence on cleanliness, in a ho of the slightest variations from their own ways that may entirely esca your notice, above all on how much your servant is paid, or any oth financial detail that will serve for computing the wealth with whi even the most bedraggled, foot-weary outside barbarian is credite Yours is a strange servant indeed if he does not oblige them with eve possible scrap of information which he has succeeded in picking u or, as a last resort, made up; and he will never believe in your express dislike of having an inquisitive audience crowded about you. The interest gives him "face"; why should it not you also? The naïve of these rural gatherings is often unbelievable. I have more than on been asked in all sincerity whether I were Japanese; like the docto whose eyes also were blue, I have been asked how many feet I can s down into the ground.

The girls sat serenely in their chairs, reading, sleeping, even writin letters, now and then taking pity on the carriers, or on themselves, an getting out for a few *li* of exercise. The doctor might have spent week on every mile of road attending to the sick and ailing. Wherev we stopped, babies were brought out, and older people crowded arou cheerfully displaying ailments. Even if she tried to keep her identi secret, being short both of medicine and of time, our coolies, or unbu dened travelers who passed us, dropped word that a great foreign heal was coming. She and I were strolling ahead of the caravan one mor ing when we noticed a man in the faded gray-blue remnants of a soldier's uniform squatted in a peanut-field below the trail, clawing o the still unripe ground-nuts with his fingers and eating them. Th doctor made some exclamation, and without so much as turning arou the fellow began reciting his troubles. He had come from Honan a soldier, he told us, in the dialect of the north, continuing to grub u and wolf green peanuts; but he had been naughty and they ha whipped him very hard, as he put it, in the language of a child, an now he was sick and could only walk a few *li* a day. Without a coppers he was trying to make his way hundreds of miles back to his nati province. The doctor led him back to the caravan and, calling th carrier with her medicines, treated his beaten back, a horrible sig to behold. But what more could we do for him than give him a litt money and tell him to crawl on to Kienchang, where the Germa missionary had a simple dispensary? There are so many such cas in China that individuals cannot help much, and the Chinese will 1

such a man die before their eyes without any more sympathy or attention than a yellow dog. Fortunately, superstition helps a little, for if a man dies on your premises or at their entrance his spirit will haunt you and your family for all time, according to the Chinese; hence the threat to die on a man's door-step sometimes brings succor which mere pleading never would. The Chinese are equally astonished at the inexplicable altruism of the foreigner toward the sufferings of mere strangers and at his indifference to the curse that will be brought upon him by a man dying on the premises.

I have never traveled with any one more fearless than the doctor, except in one particular. She would march as blithely into a milling mass of coolies as into an afternoon tea; she would be carried in her chair over the most precarious bridges and along the deepest chasm without batting an eyelid; she traveled her district night and day when it swarmed with bandits and undisciplined soldiers; she faced fearlessly the most disgusting and virulent forms of disease; but, being from Chicago, she would climb a tree, a city wall, a ruined pagoda, anything climbable, at sight of a cow or a water-buffalo. Let a lowing be heard on the far horizon, let a *shui-niu* show its snout above the surface of a mud-hole on the far edge of the trail, and the doctor was out of her chair at a speed it taxed the eye to follow, to make any detour necessary to avoid the blinking, somnolent, harmless amphibian. Usually no real detour was possible, and the sight of Napoleon trembling with blanched face before an Austrian hare could not have been more incredible than the causes for raillery the pride of the station gave her new colleague from the Dakota prairies.

One morning we overtook a score of these plodding, slough-loving animals, and I am sure the doctor would have walked through two contending armies without a fraction of the fear with which she negotiated that passage. The animals, by the way, all wore heavy rice-straw sandals, of which their cicerone carried a full load—a mere Westerner might have fancied that he could have laid this burden on one of the buffaloes—for their soft hoofs would soon be ruined on the hard flagstone trails. They moved at the speed of Andean llamas, perhaps a mile an hour, grazing as they went, descending into every stream and squatting in every mud-hole, with only their snouts and eyes of perfect contentment protruding, ignoring for long periods all the threats and entreaties of the driver. In the light of that journey with the doctor I wonder if the Eastern tales about the belligerency of the water-buffalo, the carabao of the Philippines, do not come by

way of Chicago. I have never met one that could not be put to ignominious rout with nothing more deadly than a stern eye.

Nearly a year before, the retreating or advancing troops of the South—or of the North; the difference is nil—had laid waste the region through which we were passing, so that there remained only ruined mud wrecks of houses, shops, and inns, the woodwork of their walls and roofs deliberately torn out to furnish the soldiers fire-wood, some gutted by wanton fires, even the mud-brick cooking-stoves of what had been wayside inns wrecked for sport, rice-hullers, and fanning-mills astonishingly like our own, though made by hand here in the far interior, smashed in pastime, everything of value in the temples and shrines along the way carried off, the gaudily painted mud gods still standing or sitting on their thrones in the wrecked buildings like abandoned children. Civil war is particularly reckless in China, where the man from another province is a foreigner, where even neighboring towns often have bitter rivalries.

The smaller places had been completely destroyed and abandoned, but the larger towns had either escaped by dint of size, scaring off the soldiers in whom the coward and the bully are so nicely blended, or the demand for accommodations along this much-traveled route had caused them to be built up again in the year that had elapsed. Here the tea- and rice-shops were once more noisy with clients and with efforts to entice others to enter, with primitive cooking and the rattle of coppers down the southern China form of cash-register—a bamboo several feet long, its top partition slotted and the bottom one whole, padlocked upright, making it impossible for a passing thief to fish out any of the contents in the time at his disposal. Many of these towns still swarmed with soldiers, of the North this time; even a magistrate from Chihli expressed to us his sympathy for the Southerners who had to endure these swarms of ruffianly carpet-baggers. Like vagabonds turned bandits they strutted about every place of size, commandeering every available space, sleeping on stolen straw in the frontless rooms of ruined hamlets.

It was partly this rabble soldiery as well as our haste to reach a new province that caused us, by means of the doctor, as expert in the proper mixture of command and cajolery as in the local dialect, to push on later than usual one evening. When the wardrobe-trunk that commonly brought up the rear was thumped down more than two hours after dark on a black night along the most atrocious trail to be found

even on the edges of provinces, we could not blame the trio that carried it for the vociferous language with which they entertained the village. But the Chinese coolie is childlike in both his provoking and his lovable ways, and before the first round of tea was over our whole band seemed to have forgotten completely the laborious day, and had regained their racial cheerfulness, smilingly fingering our things as we unpacked them, running unasked on what should have been far wearier legs than mine to fetch us hot water or whatever we needed, showing characteristics that cannot fail to modify, at least momentarily, a temperament growing cynical with much seeing of the human race. My own part in cheering up the crowd in such situations as this included the distributing of pinches of American tobacco, but this was so much stronger than the fine-cut stuff mixed with peanut-oil which they smoked in the tiny bowls dug in the roots of their little bamboo sticks that they commonly referred to it, between the coughing-spells of those so unwise as to inhale it like their own, as *ta yen*—"big smoke," the most common colloquial term for opium—and surreptitiously to throw it away. There was a far greater demand for the tin box in which my tobacco came than for the contents.

That last night in Kiangsi Province was unexpectedly comfortable. There being only one semi-private room in the half-ruined inn of the more than half-ruined village, I was left to put up my cot in the kind of man-made cave constituting the main room, where I should have been constantly awakened by the annoyances which a score of coolies unknowingly perpetrate on their foreign sleeping-companions. I had dimly noted on arriving a building a few yards back along the mainly ruined street. Two or three times I strolled past this to dull the edge of village curiosity, and toward the end of my after-dinner cigar, when all the available attention seemed for the moment to be centered elsewhere, I caught up my rolled cot and bedding and, holding it in front of me, strolled as nonchalantly as possible to the building under observation. Inside, some minutes having demonstrated that no one, unless it were some wise rascal who would bide his time, seemed to have suspected my trick, my eyes gradually made out better luck than I had hoped. Not only was the large frontless but wooden-floored room surprisingly free from the filth which beggars and soldiers, and their four-legged counterparts, the pigs and curs, would have left in a less ruinous place, but in the center of it was a curious raised chamber, three feet above the floor and well built of new lumber, with a door that could be closed. Whether it was a secret store-room in a building

constructed by some merchant or the inner sanctum and idol's niche of a temple I knew no more than I cared. It sufficed that it was far enough away from the crowded inn and the gang shrieking over their fan-tan across the narrow street from it to make the night as promising as any I had spent on the road, and still near enough so that I might have heard the screams of ladies in distress. I made my bed in the raised room without betraying my doings even to the village curs, and though I thought as I lay down that never was there a finer place for bandits or soldiers to try their luck on an isolated and unprotected foreigner, or for a fanatical Chinese to do away safely with a hated foreign devil, the next thing I knew was broad daylight streaming in upon me.

We had been climbing ever higher the day before, though so gradually that I had hardly noticed it, and the ascent continued even more definitely that morning. In places there were low flat stone steps for considerable distances. In mid-morning we sighted what looked like a city wall, overgrown with grass and jungle, climbing away over steep hills, the boundary between Kiangsi and Fukien Provinces. We looked back for the last time upon the terraced rice-fields of the province that had been my home for months and passed through a great arched gate of the ruinous old wall into another wretched little soldier-wrecked town. Excitement all but overcame the doctor, for Fukien was her second and perhaps—for remember, the other one was Chicago—her favorite home. At least half the eighteen provinces of China claim the palm for scenic beauty, but the landscape before us would have given Fukien a high rating in the list of any unbiased observer. Across it, a long day's travel away, just over the tip of a slender half-ruined pagoda protruding from the semi-jungle along the trail, the famous Thumb Mountain stood out on the sky-line of an endless vista of tumbled ranges, blue, then purple with distance. In the rich gesture-language of the Chinese an upraised thumb means "*ting hao!* first class, finest ever, A 1," and the Fukienese, whether native- or Chicago-born, insist that this perfect replica in a mountain-peak of an upturned thumb is evidence that even Nature praises the beauty of their unrivaled province.

Fukien would be even more certain of first place, were the samples forthwith laid before us any criterion, if it had claimed to have the worst substitutes for roads in the former Celestial Empire. I had concluded that the trails of Kiangsi were nothing to boast of; half a dozen *li* along the cross between a ditch and a narrow

dike, scattered with stones, running with paddy-field water, so maltreating to the feet as almost to spoil what was otherwise fine walking—Oh, well, at least the Fukien *li* were shorter. Before long we picked up the beginnings of a river that was to develop into the Min, principal stream of the new province, and navigated even in its far upper reaches by curious bamboo rafts. The small ends of a dozen or so of bamboos, laid side by side, and bent, by fire, up and over to form rounded bows like those of children's toboggans, and a few crosspieces of the same material, sometimes with a central raised bamboo platform for perishable goods, complete an astonishingly light and wieldy craft, on which great cargoes went slipping down a river so shallow here that a canoe could hardly have floated.

We reached the Fu Ying T'ong, or Protestant mission, of a large town with a three-barreled name on the upper Min before dark, to find the native pastor and his cronies even more hospitable than we wished. Having once before housed the doctor, he knew that it was not she who carried a husband as excess baggage; hence the lady from Dakota and I were solemnly ushered into the choicest—or may I say least unchoicest?—room in the rambling heap of buildings as soon as it had been made fit for foreign occupancy. We suggested a different division of the party, and foreign prestige made it stand; but it was evident that the good pastor saw us off again next morning unconvinced that I could be traveling with such companions without pertaining to one of them.

The last of our four eighty-*li* days was down the bank of the growing Min, under the very brow of the Thumb Mountain, then for three final hours across the sandy, flat semi-jungle which a receding lake of long ago seemed to have left in an elbow of the river, upon which we came again with considerable daylight still left. Just across the now wider stream the weather-blackened old wall of Shaowu, the goal pessimists had assured us we would never reach, surrounded a town of no visible importance. A pontoon of clumsy old boats linked together with chains of ancient Chinese craftsmanship lifted us across the river as soon as it had closed behind a descending craft of similar build; we strode through an aged city gate into the incorrigible hubbub and unforgettable scents of a Chinese town, and turned from a grass-grown street in the heart of China into a compound in the heart of America—at least this great grassy, walled yard, with its well-tended trees and flowers, its big modern house comfortable with all the niceties of American life, and its up-



to-date girls' school seemed so, in the sudden startling contrast it presented to the crowded, dirty, noisy, helter-skelter Chinese world which surrounded it closely on every side and through which we had been traveling for what seemed unbroken weeks.

## CHAPTER VII

### DOWN THE MIN TO FOOCHOW

**I** HAD come at last, for the first time in China, within the political ægis of the South, for the realm of the Southern party by no means coincides with what is geographically Southern China. Militarily even this Northern city of a Southern province was now and again in Northern hands, and at the moment about a hundred of the hated Northerners were holding the town. Ragged boy soldiers from the South had come into Shaowu, guided by a petty thief living outside a city gate, about Christmas-time of the preceding year, and the Northern soldiers had run away. "We do not mind feeding these, for they are our own people," the town had said, and the new conquerors were invited to eat with the inhabitants where the Northerners had only been able to enter by threats or force. But the difference had not been great after all, and the change was of short duration anyway, for about Chinese New Year's the Northerners came back, looting and destroying wherever anything remained to plunder and sack. Northern soldiers do not thrive in the South, and the most woebegone ragamuffins in the tatters of uniforms, diseased, malarial, emaciated wrecks, slept with equally gaunt curs in foul nests of old straw and rags in the superstructures over the city gates and equally noisome dens about the shrunken town, yet nevertheless retained that bullying manner which the Chinese coolie, so pleasant a fellow in his natural state, seems to take on when he dons the gray cotton and shoulders a more or less effective weapon. The soldiers were surly toward the natives, and vice versa, but though they occupied a ruined temple just outside the wall of the spacious mission compound, they had never molested the missionaries.

Shaowu was as thoroughly ruined as any walled town I saw in China. It had been half destroyed by the Taiping rebels, let in by a traitor, and often burned and looted by bandits and soldiers since, until even the territory within its half-hour circuit of a wall was half wilderness. This seemed to have proved both a benefit and a curse



In Foochow district and other sections free from foot-binding, women and girls take the places of men and boys at the treadle water-lifting machines with which water is raised into the rice-fields



The three dagers she wears in her hair are less cutting to-day than the sickles with which the "field woman" of Foochow district makes her way to the rice-field



The "field women" of Foochow district do not bind their feet and are quite the equal of the men for work

to the remaining population, for with twice as much land per capita, in a climate where nature needs no great urging, their livelihood came so easily that foreigners could not get a carpenter or a cook, a chicken or a cat, in the place, but had to send over the border of Kiangsi for them. Yet so many officials have gone from Shaowu to the capital during past centuries that the town, insignificant in appearance, has a *hong* of its own in Peking—the *hong* is a cross between a Masonic lodge, a club, a temple, a labor-union, and a chamber of commerce; and a monument on a hilltop above the town in honor of a long-dead local poetess showed that even in China, nay, even within their own province, women are not always without glory. Except for that, and the benefits brought by the American ladies augmented by my erstwhile traveling-companions and by a medical son of Yale who was wearing himself out combating the rinderpest which bade fair to decimate the region's remaining stock, Shaowu was only an unsightly mass of weather-blackened buildings in the center of the inclosure of its irregular, jungle-grown wall, with grass and vines and fast-growing semi-tropical brush half concealing mud-brick ruins elsewhere, half-hearted bits of cultivation scattered among them. The place's only beauty is the mountains round about it, the splendid trees and other lush greenery within and without the walls, and the river Min, meandering a wide clear ribbon from where it emerged from the hills to the North to where it disappeared among those of the South, the latter particularly entrancing to me, since it offered a swift descent to Foochow and the outside world.

We sent out word as secretly as possible soon after my arrival that a foreigner needed a boat for the journey to the capital of the province, and I went to bed that night assured that I could push off at dawn. It was some time later than that when a sturdy Foochow boatman, short and stocky as his Neapolitan fellows and speaking a language that was Greek to me, came to say that he was ready to start, at any price I chose to pay, or none at all—if I could get him permission to go. The military, after their usual fashion, had *lafoo*-ed every boat within reach, as well as all coolie load-carriers, on the possibility of some day needing them; there was no means of escape, for a second pontoon-bridge below the town only opened to those who had an order from the authorities.

The only available interpreter for a call at the yamen was one of the young American ladies at the mission. It was my first encounter with the old-time magistrate one reads of in the accounts of travelers

in China in the old days when foreign ambassadors to the Chinese courts were required to kowtow before the Son of Heaven. He kept us waiting in the anteroom of the yamen much longer than Chinese courtesy prescribes, while not only the soldiers but the very tea-servers treated us with hints of contempt; and when he flounced in at last, with an angry flop of the long sleeves down over his fittingly concealed hands, dirty with lack of soap and hideous with inch-long finger-nails beneath each of which a hill of potatoes might have found nourishment, my hopes were not high. Being a magistrate, he should have spoken *gwun-hwa*, the official language of Peking which we call mandarin, but after a few perfunctory greetings that showed he was as scanty of it as I—for though the city was in Northern hands the magistrate was a native—we turned to the missionary lady as interpreter. The magistrate showed all too plainly that he did not consider it proper respect on my part to have brought one of the despised sex as intermediary, and any good will that may have hidden itself in his make-up seemed rapidly to ooze away.

Had he not let the missionaries have a dozen boats the other day? Not at all, replied the interpreter, with mission courtesy; he had merely let the boats that had brought missionaries up from their summer homes return to Foochow, as the consuls had insisted all officials must do. For, ran the rest of the old but here unspoken argument, to let boatmen or carriers pass freely while with foreigners and then commandeer them before they get back to their starting-points was contrary to our treaty rights; if the foreigners could not assure safe return to those they hired, they were as effectually held up as if the officials had refused them means of transportation in the first place.

An angry flop of the long sleeves showed that the point had struck home, but it is not the way of a Chinese of the old school to lose face before his subordinates, who, after the time-honored Chinese fashion, were clustered like flies about all corners of the yamen, listening with all ears, and relaying every scrap of information to the very coolies in the yard. He shifted with that jesuitical cleverness at which the Chinese are adepts and went on as if his original statement remained entirely true and unanswered. He had recently let the foreigners have a dozen boats when the military were making it hot for him every time he let one go. He talked as if I had asked for half a dozen boats, with a hint that these outside-country people always wanted to travel like emperors. I was perhaps unwise in assuring him that one or even part of one boat would do, thereby

still more reducing his idea of my importance, already blighted by the modesty of the missionary, and making him more daring. No, he could not let any more boats go now; the soldiers were holding all such things against him. We learned later that a gang of the Northerners had torn up his kitchen and cooking-stove that very morning, hence his angry yet half-terrified manner.

It began to look as if I might remain indefinitely in Shaowu, and I had pressing reasons, quite aside from the lack of excitement the little ruined place offered, to get on down the river. We had advanced every argument in vain, and the magistrate seemed about to rise and thereby bring the interview to a fatal end when a yamen hanger-on mumbled something into his unwashed ear. He started, sat down more tightly, almost smiled, and his voice became much more courteous. Was it true that the famous foreign woman doctor had arrived with me? Ah, he had been waiting for her to come and treat his son. The son, the interpreter managed to interpolate in English, was an epileptic and several other kinds of an incurable, which did not prevent, since he was about twenty years old, his being the father of three children to carry on the precious family line; and the doctor, though her regular station was three days to the southwest over the mountains, was famous for her cures throughout northern Fukien.

The son, it seemed, had been outdoing even himself in fits lately. Could the doctor come and see him right away? Also the grandson seemed to have something wrong with him.

The missionary now took on the bland, placid manner of the upper hand. Of course; the doctor was always ready to help any one needing her assistance. But she was a friend of the traveler before him, and very anxious that he should get on down the Min without delay.

The Chinese are expert in concealing their feelings, but there was a visible shadow of pique and anger on the magistrate's face. He turned the conversation deftly to some neutral subject until his face had been somewhat saved. Then casually, as if it were of no importance, he asked a subordinate if any official boats were going down the Min. The man slipped out and came in again before the next phase of the conversation had run out, to say that a yamen runner was going down next morning to the first large town below.

"If your countryman does not require a whole private boat—" the magistrate mused, as if to himself.

I repeated that anything large enough for me to lie down on

would do, and we parted with the stereotyped ceremonies which do not yield even to anger in polite Chinese intercourse, the magistrate's last words being that he hoped the doctor would come at once.

She did, early in the afternoon, examined son and grandson, and told the father that she would bring medicine in the morning. Such is the faith of those Chinese who believe at all in foreign medicines that after the first treatment the magistrate would probably consider the cure well enough started for him safely to break his part of the unspoken bargain. Poor doctor! Her unselfish service to Celestial mankind was soon to be sadly rewarded. A few weeks later a needle pierced her rubber glove while treating a gangrenous soldier, her hospital burned down when she could not have lifted a hand to save herself, and she was carried back over the mountains to Shaowu with little but her unfailing cheerfulness left.

The "slipper boats" of the Min, as the foreigners call them, are long and narrow, shaped indeed like a Chinese slipper, for there are days of rapids to shoot. The one into which a carrier dropped my few belongings early next morning, at the lower end of the city wall outside the east gate, among a score of others bearing home-made flags showing that they had been commandeered by the military, was brand-new and especially fitted for missionary travel. The characters for "American mission" were painted large on both sides of the low superstructure which, unlike the mere curve of matting over the ordinary boats, had been raised by side walls into a kind of little cabin by the Foochow mission that ordinarily used it. Inside, these walls were decorated with the colored Chinese lithographs of foreign firms doing business in China, the chief masterpieces being four unspeakable chromos put out by our great oil trust showing in graphic, if ludicrous, pictures the advantages to the Chinese home of kerosene lamps in place of their own crude lights, particularly what happens when the wick gets too high. There were several pages, a few years old, of reading matter and advertisements from our most widely sold American weekly, then the red-rooster and the upturned-thumb poster with which another important foreign commercial enterprise in China makes that land almost as unsightly as our own with allegations of the superexcellence of one of its brands of cigarettes, and finally, in the place of honor, a framed page from a well-known fashion sheet showing seven young ladies, some of them in the scandalous evening-dress of the Western world, and some in even less than that.



I waited an hour, then another, and still nothing happened. I was about to hurry back to the mission to implore the doctor not to take her medicines to the yamen until I was actually started, when two men, the yamen runner and a companion, much the worse for a night of opium, liquor, and general dissipation, drifted on board behind some nondescript belongings. The two boatmen—my sturdy man of the morning before and a boy of about twelve—came from eating rice, and we were off. First of all they put up an old American flag, obviously made in China; the officials seemed glad of its protection against the bandits. The bridge of boats at a narrow place below town opened at sight of our tissue-paper document with its large red stamp, we shot through, paying our toll as we passed, and I was free. The toll, by the way, was collected in a long-handled wooden dipper which a pontoon man held out to us; though in this case coppers were used, the usual payment is in salt.

Somehow a companion boat managed to slip through behind us, and seemed to be taking orders from our sturdy boatman, so that both boats may have belonged to him. We shot some rapids at twenty miles an hour and sped down a river of increasing size, the boatmen, standing like gondoliers at the stern, having only to steer. This kept them both busy in the rapids, but left one free the rest of the time to run the cooking-stove aft. This consisted of a large shallow iron kettle over a little earthenware charcoal brazier, but its position indicated strong foreign influence. The Chinese, being geniuses at doing things backward, always do their cooking at the bow, so that the movement of the boat, if not the wind, forces the passengers to eat smoke most of the day. Perhaps this is in the hope of reducing their appetites for the rice to which they are entitled with the crew, but the veritable battle it takes to get the flower-pot and kettle moved to the rear even when one has hired the entire boat suggests that to do so is "bad joss."

It began to look as if I might make a record trip down to Foochow in three days, though Shaowu was about half-way on my overland journey from the Yang Tze to the Fukien capital. But to my annoyance the boatmen swung us in at the first town of any size, though the sun was still high overhead and it was barely three by the local time-pieces when we stepped ashore. There were *tufei*—"tupi," the Foochow boatmen seemed to call them—bandits and robbers, below, the passengers explained in something approaching the mandarin dialect, and it would be unsafe to risk having night overtake us before we

reached the next town. More likely their real reason for the stop was that, having just begun to recover from the dissipations of the night before, they wished to enjoy the flesh-pots of this place.

There was nothing for me to do but see the sights of Gna-k'ao, as it seemed to be called. Like many minor river towns in southern China, it consisted of one long narrow street between the river and the green hills close behind it, a street dark, dirty, and crowded beyond Western conception, with rude balconies high above the stony river-bank that served as garbage and sewage collector, overrun with pigs and dogs, women washing at the edge of the stream. Most feet were not bound, and many women and girls were barefoot, or at least stockingless in straw sandals, a queer sight after eighteen months of almost universally bound feet. I was in Fukien now, one of the three coast provinces where there is much less of this abominable custom; in time I was to get used to these sturdy bare legs common only in the southern coastal regions.

Our boat crowded against a hundred others—Gna-k'ao was just then a place of refuge for boats normally at Shaowu—so closely that we swayed when a man boarded one twenty craft down the line, and they creaked all night with every movement on a boat and with that of the river, and the noise and the smoke of cooking were never interrupted, whereas by pushing on a bit, or crossing the river, we should have had a perfect sleeping-place. These things were annoyances only to me, of course, an effete product of what we proudly call civilization; for the sturdy boatman and the boy, who stretched out on the bare planks outside the roof, with an oar and an earthenware pot respectively under their heads, slept like healthy children.

We fooled around Gna-k'ao most of the morning. First the yamen runner seemed to be going on with us, then some deputy seemed to be thinking of it; there was much running up and down the bank, much of the scatter-brained chatter all Chinese business requires, I insisting that we go on. This seemed to win in the end, for our chief boatman, who had more independence than the average working-class Chinese, pushed off at last with an impatient exclamation, the river caught us, and a moment later Gna-k'ao had disappeared around a curve. It was a brilliant day, filled with rapids until they grew wearisome, as did reading, the only recreation, since there was not even rowing in which I might have insisted on joining. Green hills with great rocks were everywhere, though with only a thin line of trees against the sky-line, men cutting brush on their slopes instead

of letting it grow into real wood. At a place which I understand to be Sun Ch'ong there was formerly a bridge across the Min; now only big cut-stone piers with high brush on top of them remained. We were constantly shooting rapids as high as they could possibly have been shot in so frail a craft, sometimes with drops of a foot at a time, one after another, like long stairways, down which we went with a dash, our boat scraping its tail on the stony bottom at every drop. Shrieks and screams whenever we approached big rapids, with constant chances of being hailed by bandits between them, kept the trip exciting. While one of my crew steered with both oar and rudder, the other cooked or ate, though the current was swift indeed. I did not realize the dangers of the worst rapids until I saw the boat following in our wake dash through them behind us, my chief boatman screaming and waving to show the channel and keep the craft from bursting wide open on the innumerable rocks. The sturdy man of Foochow was less timid than the average of his kind in other things than running rapids, and he pushed on into the evening instead of stopping early at another town, and tied up at the bank in an uninhabitable region for all the talk of bandits.

Nor was it idle talk. Early the third morning we came to a large town where about a dozen boats flying the American flag were just preparing to leave the stony beach. A large missionary party was on its way up to Shaowu from its summer homes, with a host of servants, children, Chinese students, converts, new-comers to the mission field, and tons of baggage and goods for the ensuing year. They had been held up by bandits who had relieved them of several boat-loads of supplies, and were destined to be held up again before they reached their destination. A large party is worth trouble, where a lone man without any visible belongings is not; moreover, going down such a river as the Min is much less risky than crawling up it so slowly that any one can overtake you along the bank. These boats had already been more than two weeks on their way from Foochow, and would be as long again to Shaowu; I thanked my good judgment in making the journey from north to south.

That third day was on the whole the best of the trip down the Min, though the others were also delightful. The rapids were almost incessant; there were wonderful gorges where bandits might lie in wait—and often did, according to the gestures accompanying the incomprehensible dialect of my boatmen. Their struggles were

almost constant—rapids among endless labyrinths of huge, jagged, grayish-black rocks, narrow throats through which the water raged, hair-pin turns, boiling and foaming stretches, whirlpools of mysterious depths, others dangerously placid, and many beautiful gorges, down the dark narrowness of which the boatmen pointed saying, "*Tupi*," and they were not men to imagine dangers. On the whole I had perhaps never had a day when chances of disaster came so swiftly one upon another.

Unlike most of China, the interior of Fukien has not yet been entirely denuded of forest, and one of the delights of the trip down the Min was its wooded hills. A much stranger sight for China was the evergreen plantations in all stages that for some of that third day covered hill after hill, from slopes just burned off for new plants to youthful trees in close exact rows. One expects to see such things in advanced, foresighted, conserving countries like Japan and Germany, but not in wasteful, destructive, short-sighted ones like China and the United States. Was this un-Chinese policy due to Japanese or other alien influence, or could it be possible that the Chinese were doing it on their own initiative? Mainly Japanese, some one later assured me, so far as the planting goes; and mainly American in destructive deforestation. For an American company was cutting the big timber farther inland, and floating it down to the coast. The Chinese were also naturally doing their share to reduce to the general level one of the few of their once finely wooded provinces that has not yet been completely denuded. Accustomed to using timbers as soon as they reach the size of telegraph-poles, they were tumbling immature trees down to the river, making them into rafts, and floating them also down to Foochow. It would not be like the Chinese, accustomed for centuries to exploit everything above the surface, to let trees grow to maturity. The Chinese seem unable to wait for maturity, even in marriage, and they may have come to prefer these slim poles to sawed beams for their mud-brick buildings, as they prefer green nuts and fruits. Only their ponderous coffins call for big logs, and even now they were making new rafts, so that the naturally well-wooded hills along the Min will soon present to the rapid-shooting traveler, unless this incredible planting of new growth outstrips the denuding tendency, as bare outlines as most of deforested China.

The big logs from the American camps farther inland are sent down only at high water. Even then many of them catch on the

projecting points of countless jagged rocks that only for a short season are under water, and as this falls they remain there for another year. Hundreds of logs hung far above the present level, fantastically tumbled together on pointed rocks, caught in a "frog," the darker color of those covered in June showing that the Min is then a river indeed; there they would stay until another June floats them off. We passed for many miles, through almost all that third day, masses of these sharp protruding rocks, and on their jagged tops were not only logs but here and there the skeleton of a boat, high above the water, its rotting wicker baskets and the remnants of some cargo akin to lime cast about it.

Whoever rides the streams of southern China becomes familiar, if only at a distance, with those most laborious members of the human family, the trackers. Often it requires a score of men to haul a boat back up the rapids down which they slip so easily; bent completely double like closed jack-knives, straining as only the human being, backed by will-power, can, toiling harder and more earnestly than any four-legged draft-animal known to natural history, theirs is a job to wipe out all the ennui of effete civilization. Day after day they climb over miles of chaotic, sole-piercing rocks, wade waist-deep in treacherous waters, breast roaring rapids rope in hand, forever tugging at the end of the line attached to the top of the mast of a cumbersome boat that moves no faster than a house on rollers; anything forgotten at one night's stopping-place can easily be retrieved in an hour at the end of the next day. The cliffs and gorges echoed with their chant—"Yo hee! Yo ho!"—and with that of the galley-like rowers; for there are places where the shore gives no foothold and the only way to mount is by a mighty struggle with many oars. They are something like our levee negroes, these trackers of the Min, yet in other ways quite different. No African, for example, least of all of the United States, would exert himself a fraction as much; and not even negroes would be so cheerful under such cheerless conditions.

The Min is so swift and treacherous that on the larger cargo-boats and the big rafts the steersman is put high up on a platform, like the bridge of a steamer, though abaft rather than forward of the beam, and the mighty sweeping rudder which he manipulates is often more than twice as long as the boat, and weighted on the inboard end. Sometimes the weight is a huge stone, but such is the Chinese economy that these great oar-rudders, which are whole trees, flattened and turned up a bit at the outer end, and no doubt sold with the other

lumber down-stream, are more often weighted with a bit of the cargo—a bundle of native paper, a sack of rice, a package of some other compact and heavy product of northern Fukien. In the dangerous and laborious stretches of the Min, particularly that third day, where many a boat had been wrecked, it was fascinating to watch one of these great cargo craft with its enormous rudder negotiating a swift current amid a labyrinth of jagged rocks. It was even more striking than the clever way in which my own boatmen took us by wisdom and main force through places where we had every reason to expect to be wrecked and drowned or dashed unconscious against the myriad rocky obstacles.

It was evident that a tracker must now and then be swept to death in the rapids he attempted to breast from jagged rocks to sharper pinnacle, and that here and there a boatman must go down in a whirlpool. The impression was confirmed several times during the day, first early in the afternoon by the sight almost under our gun-wales of a coolie corpse lying face down in the water, evidently with his two-piece cotton denim clothing caught on a point of rock. He was much fatter than he had ever been in life, fat as a Chinese banker or a tax-squeezing Tuchun, and there seemed to be an acre of flies on his swollen back. No one gave him any attention, or evidently ever meant to; the rapids left no time to think of anything but self-preservation; the disposal of his remains was his family's business, and no doubt his descendants were far away. Much joss they would have to burn to appease his spirit and keep it from bringing them misfortune.

I was never certain whether the men in uniform and armed with rifles who several times during the day hailed us from the shore were soldiers or bandits; it would be splitting hairs anyway, for in present-day China there is often no real distinction. It was not until toward dusk that these became threatening. A small boat flying a white flag with two Chinese characters was tied to a rock well out in the stream before a little town in the gorges. Two armed men in semi-uniform stepped out of it and shouted to us to come in. The chief boatman called to me, stretched on my cot inside, to ask whether he should obey or not. Since his dialect had little resemblance to mandarin, I had no means of knowing whether the order was legitimate or not, but even if they were soldiers they had no concern with a foreigner, who was not subject to their laws or their *likin*. I stood up outside the low deck-house to show them that the American

flag at our stern was no ruse, trusting that the prestige or fear of foreigners was still strong enough in this back-water of the deflowered empire to prevent them from deliberately shooting at a foreigner, whereas to remain out of sight would have given them the excuse that they did not know there was a foreigner on board. They continued to demand that we swing in. The boatman kept an inquiring eye upon me without obeying. Had the fellows been more persuasive and less commanding I might have given orders to stop, if only out of curiosity, but I am just bull-headed enough to be more easily coaxed than commanded. I indicated that the boat was to keep to her course. The fellows began fingering their cartridge-belts as if reluctantly, and increased their bellowing. By this time the swift current had carried us abreast of them. They began running along the shore, aiming their rifles and screaming ever more angrily. I had faith enough in Chinese marksmanship to trust that with the boat on the wing they would score a miss, if foreign prestige did not suffice, and remained standing at the stern. The prestige sufficed, evidently—unless they were out of ammunition, which is by no means unusual among bandits and soldiers, and were depending on bluff to make their empty rifles effective. Though they continued to run along the shore until a whirlpool about a rock peninsula cut them off, and stood there with leveled weapons, no other sound than their threatening voices, growing ever fainter, broke the roar of the rapids that soon swept us out of reach even of sharp-shooters.

I learned later, as I had often heard before, that this was no region to fool about in. Banditry had been rife there for eight years. The border-line, as it were, between the great North and the small South, politically and militarily speaking, to say nothing of the mountainous character of the country, with its corridor-like gorges on the main travel-routes—for in Fukien there is no transportation in the real sense except on the Min and its branches—make this a natural place for it. A few days before, an American missionary woman had been robbed even of her shoes on the branch which joined us that evening, and not many weeks afterward the American manager of the lumber-company was assassinated. The dozen ragamuffins who perpetrated the lesser of these outrages had three rusty muskets and one knife but no food. The bandits of this region are for some reason friendly to missionaries, and had made a standing offer to "clean up" the towns where any one offended them. There was something peculiarly Chinese, too, in the fact that the magistrate of

Yenping, in whose district this robbery took place, had the money ready before the victim could put in a claim for reimbursement, which, being one of the still considerable minority of missionaries who think they should take their chances without an appeal to force or any other outside aid, she had at last reports not done.

The dangers of rapids and bandits were by no means so troublesome as less excusable annoyances between them. All that third day we seemed to stop every five or ten miles to pay several dollars in *likin* taxes on the bit of rice in our hold, and my head boatman, who evidently scorned to get by on a foreigner's face, was always stepping off into a *likin*-boat flying a makeshift flag at the river-side to show his papers. Then they must stop at every town of any size to *mai tunghsi*, to buy things, because whatever the place was noted for happened to be a copper cheaper there than farther down,—bamboo boat-poles, smoked to straighten them, baskets of queer shape, ropes of woven bamboo splints, pillows—though this last does not mean what the West understands by a pillow, but bright red, brilliantly decorated things about fifteen inches long, square and hard, except that the middle was slightly hollowed out and the gaudy wooden covering had a slight give in the little air-space between it and the rudely hewn piece of wood that made up the unseen bulk of the contrivance. The “pillows” of the towns along the lower Min are famous throughout China.

At one such town early on the third afternoon the boatmen stayed ashore so long that I rebelled, and after calling for them and making a round of the tea-houses in vain, I climbed along the waterfront asking bids from other boats, of which there were many, on the rest of the journey down to Foochow. It was a pleasure for once to have the whip-hand, for had the almost universal arrangement prevailed of paying about two thirds of the price before we started and more of it along the way, I should have been at the mercy of the boatmen, however much they may have wished to dawdle. But in his eagerness to escape Shaowu the chief had agreed to go for anything I chose to give him when the journey was over. Hence they came racing when news of my inquiries reached them and we were off in a hurry, never again stopping until we reached Yenping, the metropolis of the upper Min, well after dark, the rapids having ceased just in time to save us from having to tie up for the night.

The largest and most important town on the upper Min is also the most prettily situated, though I did not discover this until morning.



What was even pleasanter was that my boatman led the way to one of the several mission compounds at the top of the town and left me to spend the night among fellow-citizens. Splendid as was their hospitality, I was frequently sorry that he had not led me to some of their colleagues, for they might have been farther away from the buglers who make life miserable in every town of size in southern China. Everywhere the least experienced and least promising youngsters in uniform climb upon the city walls at about two every morning and blow the most excruciating noises unceasingly from then until daylight, partly perhaps to cheer up their opium-soaked officers with a feeling of security by the martial sounds drifting into their maudlin dreams, partly because of a Chinese superstition that the cold clear air of the small hours is best for the lungs of learners—in theory—on the bugle. I did my best to start a revolution among the medical missionaries in southern China, imploring them to tell their local dictator that they could treat no more of his soldiers on days when their nerves had been unstrung by lack of sleep from the bugle serenade, but what can you do with people brought up on the doctrine of turning the other cheek? Yenping is built on a kind of natural toboggan in a crevice of mountains that come closely down to the river, so that the city wall from which buglers made the last half of the night piercingly miserable climbs and jumps from spur to spur like an Alpine chamois. Otherwise it seemed much like ten thousand other Chinese towns, with much business—or at least busyness—along the garbage-strewn narrow sloping space of slimy earth between the wall and the rushing river.

There was another day of rapids below Yenping, but the river grew ever broader and the hills lower and less wooded, though they by no means lost their un-Chinese beauty as long as daylight lasted. A dozen times soldiers hailed us from rocks along the shores, some of them armed but most of them without visible weapons, evidently wanting either to ride down the river or to look us over and show their illegal authority. Without a foreigner on board the boatmen would of course have had to stop for inspection by any armed group and take on as many free passengers in uniform as the boat could carry; as it was we paid less attention to them than to the rapids and eddies that were constantly snatching us on and forcing the boatmen to put every ounce of energy and experience into their efforts to bring us safely through them. The political status of this part of the Min was curious, for though the Northerners were just then holding Yenping, and even Foochow, the Southerners had, by a kind of mutual agree-

ment peculiar to the Chinese spirit of compromise, a "corridor" from their holdings farther east to the coastal strips of other southern militarists, crossing the Min between the two cities. By mid-afternoon the river had grown so placid that, with the wind abaft, we ran up sails for the first time on the trip, which disclosed the fact that in contrast to the spick and span newness of the rest of my boat its sail was made of six old and much-patched flour-sacks, with bamboo poles between them. As we had more spread of flour-sack than our companions, they had to row as well as sail to keep within sight of us. When the breeze became really worth while the racial timidity of the Chinese asserted itself even in the sturdy man from Foochow, the flour-sacks came down and were laid away, and the rope tholes of the gondola-style oars began to creak again.

At length, toward sunset, we came to Jewy-cow—to write it as it sounded—whence small steamers ply to Foochow. One was already waiting to go down in the morning, but I preferred to push on in my private craft, small but more roomy and far more comfortable than I should have been packed with swarms of coolies on a snorting, whistling, smoke-and-cinder-drenched imitation steamship, especially as my boatmen had agreed at the start to continue all night on this stretch of the river, free at last from rapids, and bring me into Foochow in the morning. Though Yenping is a long way from the capital of the province on the map, the down-river trip between them is not. The head boatmen gave me to understand that there was considerable danger of *tupi* in the gorges ahead, especially by night, when even my flag would be no protection; but he said it not like a man who was trembling for his own skin, but merely so that I could not say he had not warned me, and I agreed to take whatever risk might be involved.

We saw or heard nothing of bandits; but we had other troubles. Some time in the night, during most of which I was conscious of the monotonous creaking of the oar-tholes, there came on a mighty blow, part of a typhoon which, I found later, raged over all the typhoon-bitten coast of China on that night when September was shifting over into October, forcing steamers all the way from Shanghai to Hong Kong to tie up or run for the open sea, and I was awakened to find the boat half keeled over, with the walled part of it, artistic oil advertisements and all, collapsed upon me in my cot. We just managed to save ourselves from shipwreck by pulling with much shrieking into shallow water, while I held the superstructure until it could be braced up again and the boat so turned that the gale swept through it instead

of against the side. The other boat, having only the usual rounded mat roof without walls, had less trouble, and no doubt the man from Foochow cursed these new-fangled foreign ideas to which he had succumbed. It must have been about two in the morning when we found semi-safety behind a sand-bar, myriad of which particles drew blood as they struck our faces. The rest of the night was no joy, and when a thick dull dawn broke the wind seemed worse than ever. There was no possibility of continuing by boat, as the river was as broad as a gulf farther down, and we should surely have been swamped. We could not even build a fire, so after a cold and meager breakfast, I stripped, tied on my head my clothes and whatever equipment was indispensable, sprang overboard into water that reached my neck, and struggled ashore, stung as by a blunderbuss filled with rock-salt by the sand particles racing so swiftly that they could not be seen. In a half-sheltered hollow of the bank I dressed and struck out along a scattered lot of paths to finish on foot the thirty *li* to Foochow. Not until the evening of the following day did the boats and the baggage reach our destination.

It was a very fertile, half-hilly country, with many villages, and the famous "field women" of Foochow district appeared at once and in numbers. Sturdy as men, with wonderfully developed calves, so different from the stick-like spindle-shanks of the foot-bound women of most of China, they were enough to make one shout again with joy. As one who knows anything of the history of China is aware, the Chinese came down from somewhere to the northwest and only gradually, at a fairly late date, and never entirely, conquered the aboriginal—or more nearly aboriginal—races in the southern and southwestern parts of the country. Thus many remnants of those races are still to be found along the southern coast, which is the usual explanation of why the fringe for a hundred or more miles back speaks many different dialects with little resemblance to mandarin Chinese. Legend has it that the "field women" of Foochow district are survivors of one of those races and that, the men having been killed off by the conquering Chinese, the women were preparing to flee when the Chinese—or Mongol—commanders said that would never do, since the women were the real tillers of the soil among these natural-footed barbarians, and if they got away there would be no one to feed the armies. So, continues the legend, which I repeat without vouching for it, the women were given three daggers each with which to protect themselves from the Chinese

soldiery. What proves the story true, as an Irishman might put it, is that they still have the daggers, in most cases made of pewter, sometimes of silver, and wear them now in their hair. Almost all the women I saw on my tramp into Foochow, and in my later jaunts round about it, were these big, sturdy, natural-footed, solid-legged women, with three imposing daggers thrust through the big knot in which they do their hair, one straight down from the top, the other two diagonally, the three elaborate handles protruding in as many directions.

Though they are no more noted for their beauty, to Western eyes at least, than their Chinese sisters, these Amazons of Foochow district are the most independent-looking women in China, able to compete on physical equality with their men and therefore taking no back seat for them. They worked everywhere in the fields, walking with the free gait of coolies rather than mincing along like most Chinese women, their small waists contrasting with the prize-fighter legs they made no effort to conceal. Women and girls took the place of men and boys at the treadmill sluices that raised water into the rice-fields; they were found sickle or mattock in hand, which is perhaps one reason why the region seemed better cultivated than many parts of foot-bound China. The "field women" carry great shoulder-pole loads even during the last months of pregnancy; they pole freight and passengers along the lower Min and its tributaries; during the fighting the year before they had laid away their once protective head-dress, lest the soldiers from the North impress them as boatmen or carrying coolies, and at that not all of them escaped.

Down beyond the wide expanse of the river across which no boats dared venture that day the sun came out, but the high wind continued. The again flagstoned paths through the rice-fields meandered like lost souls, but eventually they became more direct and almost roads, while towns grew all but continuous along the high river-bank. The urchins of every village I passed turned out to follow at my heels, suggesting that foreigners do not ordinarily walk abroad in this part of the country, though not only the children but even the adults were very friendly—until, as usual, I reached the city, where foreigners are fairly numerous and hence held in a certain scorn.

Along the dikes between the paddy-fields which served as roads and were often shaded with long lines of trees, scores of corpses in heavy wooden coffins, hermetically sealed and covered with a weather-deadened reed or grass mat, waited propitious time for burial. Some



In river-side Foochow it is hard to tell where the land-dwellers end and the water-dwellers begin



Plans are afoot for replacing the ancient stone bridges of Foochow with modern ones that will let floods, tides, and boats pass



Father has a light load this afternoon compared with his usual burden of the same baskets filled with rice. The advantages of twins are nowhere so apparent as along the trails of China

of them seemed to have been waiting for generations. Village life went on about them as indifferent to their presence as the trackers and boatmen were to the bloated corpses of their former fellows in the rocky gorges higher up the Min. If the geomancers whose job it is to prophesy the proper time and place to bury an orthodox Chinese find that the constellation under which a man is born is not in the ascendant when he dies, his body must be kept above ground, or at least not permanently buried, until the heavens compose themselves properly. Sometimes these overdue corpses are kept in temples or monasteries; especially from the Yang Tze southward they are set outdoors, so that children have no more compunction in capering about their dead grandfathers than goats have in browsing on any tuft of grass that may spring up from a handful of earth blown upon the coffins.

The cost of the geomancer's services and of the ground of burial are, of course, a less heavenly reason for postponing final interment, to say nothing of the funeral itself, with its priests and incense and paper "money," and even paper wives and servants and sedan-chairs, the alleged music and all the rest that every filial Chinese must provide his deceased father. I met such a funeral that morning, wailing and tom-toming its multicolored way along the perpetually wandering trails through the flooded fields as if it were physically seeking some invisible entrance to the after-world. Marco Polo always speaks of the Chinese as *burning* their dead. Was he or his amanuensis careless in his report, or was he speaking of the Mongols who then ruled the country and in whose service he spent the flower of his life; or have the Chinese really changed their customs in this respect since Marco's time? Certainly nothing would seem more horrible to the great mass of the Celestials to-day than burning, or in any other way destroying, the bodies of their dead—more 's the pity; for if they would follow many of their neighbors in the matter of cremation, millions of arable acres would not now be withdrawn from cultivation by the grave-mounds that dot the country like pustules on a smallpox-patient's face. While there is a great resemblance, the graves of China manage to differ greatly in widely separated localities. Here, in great contrast to the mere mounds of earth in most of northern and much of central China, elaborate graves of horseshoe shape, made of stone and cement and ranging from a few feet across to veritable buildings, stood out on the steep hillsides on both banks of the Min, those of rich or important men fancy in the extreme.

If we are to believe the Venetian—and in the main of course we do—the Mongols introduced, or at least continued, the practice of immolating slaves and concubines at the burials of their men of standing, and the Mings persisted in it until Ying Tsung, who died in 1450, abolished it, so that to-day only cheap replicas of the victims that were to serve them in the world to come are sacrificed at the graves even of Tuchuns and Presidents. Running through the pages of the European favorite of Kublai Khan, I found at least one reason to congratulate myself that my travels in China were of a later date. "It was the custom," reports the wandering son of the Adriatic, "for the chiefs of the race of Ghenghis Khan to be carried for interment to a certain lofty mountain named Altai, and in whatever place they happen to die, although it should be at the distance of a hundred days' journey, they are nevertheless conveyed thither. It is likewise the custom during the process of removing the bodies of these princes for those who form the escort to sacrifice such persons as they chance to meet upon the road, saying to them, 'Depart for the next world and there attend upon our deceased master,' being impressed with the belief that all whom they thus slay do actually become his servants in the next life. They do the same with respect to horses, killing the best of the stud, in order that he may have the use of them. When the corpse of Mongú was transported to this mountain, the horsemen who accompanied it, having this blind and horrible persuasion, slew upwards of twenty thousand persons who fell in their way."

I was beginning to feel the constant flagstone under my feet when I found myself in a compact town that I took to be Foochow, and in my ignorance of the local dialect I had some difficulty in discovering that it was only a neighboring village. There were rickshaws, the first I had seen since Nanchang, and the man I beckoned ran steadily for an hour before he set me down in the heart of the city itself. I had been just three weeks on the overland route from the Yang Tze, about the average time, since the speed with which I had covered the last half of the journey made up for the contrary winds on the Fu; and as I look back upon it from a considerable perspective it seems one of the most pleasant and comfortable of all my cross-country trips in China.

I had landed, it took more inquiries under difficulties to learn, in Foochow proper, the old walled city, which stands three miles inland from the river, because of the danger, in earlier days at least, of



pirate raids, and to reach the river-side suburbs and the foreign settlement took another long run by rickshaw through an endless, narrow, unbroken street of shops that for a long distance was only one building deep on either side, closely backed by rice-fields. Evidently it is not true that the Chinese have no sense of smell, for part of this three-mile street from old to "new" Foochow even they call Stinking Lane. There was now an automobile road that connected the two sections by a wide detour, but this was not too safe from assassins and robbers. I came in time to another town of size, low-lying along the river, then to an ancient stone bridge connecting this with a small island packed with humanity down to the sheer edges of its houses hanging out over the water, across which through teeming markets and maritime business a shorter but no less ancient stone bridge led to another low-lying, odorous crowded section at the bottom of the hill called Nantai, on which the foreigners have their settlement. Here I was taken in with true missionary hospitality by the youthful American dean of the mission preparatory school and, lodged high above the myriad noises of Chinese cities, looked forward to making up for many a broken night. But the president of the institution had just realized one of his great ambitions after years of struggle; he had at last got funds from the faithful at home with which to build a great clock-tower, and, this rising almost above my pillow, with weather that required open windows, I was reminded of my sins every fifteen minutes during my week in Foochow.

Those same windows looked out upon all the Fukien capital and its environs, and testified that it is one of the most picturesquely situated cities of China. From the pine-clad hilltops of the foreign settlement of Nantai along its ridge on the right bank of the Min—more exactly of one branch of it, for the Min splits some distance above and does not come together again until it has inclosed an island twelve miles long—the eyes dropped hastily down through the narrow, crowded Chinese market on the edge of the river below, with its slimy steps and its perpetual smell of fish, to the little island on which houses and shops cluster so densely that there is not a spot of earth to be seen, and it is not easy to tell where the island leaves off and the boat-homes that crowd it thickly on every side begin. I had already some conception of the floating population of southern China, but not until now did I realize its extent. Countless mat-covered boats in which as many families live—are born, married, and die for that matter—were packed in serried rows like houses without streets between them

far and wide along the river. How many thousands of the population of Foochow are at home in boats has never been accurately computed; they were so closely crowded together that many had to walk across the homes of a hundred of their neighbors to reach their own floating domiciles. How they all earn a livelihood is a mystery, for there can hardly be boating work for all that number. Many of the men work ashore, the women and children competing noisily for any boating job that may come along; but in many places the rows upon rows of watercraft of every type, from junks as clumsy as they are picturesque to little raft-like things on which cormorant fishermen paddle about, each with its pair of eyes at the bow, were so densely packed together that even in the unusual event of getting such a job they could scarcely free themselves to accept it.

One of the ancient landmarks of China will go if the nefarious plan is carried out of doing away with the old stone bridge, with its scores of crude stone piers, that connects the overcrowded little island with Nantai and the mainland beyond, in favor of a modern structure of American make; but as it is, the waters in flood or typhoon time, even the tide, to say nothing of the myriad boats, cannot pass freely up and down the Min. The throng that incessantly pours to and fro over its huge flagstone slabs, worn glassy smooth by millions of feet, most of them long since gone to whatever paths the after-world has to offer, gives it the appearance of a Chinese street from which all vestige of walls has suddenly been removed. From the T-shaped town on the left bank of river-side Foochow, the now overgrown port of the real city, the eye wanders along the single narrow swarming street that leads so odoriferously three miles north to the walled city itself, its ancient wall—though not so ancient as things go in China, being hardly five centuries old—black with age even at this distance. Built on three hills and girdled by mountains, the city proper is a striking part of the picture seen from Nantai, the river twisting away through a mountainous landscape on every hand to the unseen sea. Of its estimated million people about half live outside the walls; so for that matter is the northern half of the largest of its three hills, with a watch-tower resembling a two-story Peking gate, painted white, standing out on it against the tumbled background. This is said to have been built not only as the usual offering to the *feng-shui* but as a lighthouse—by day only, no doubt; and few boats move here at night—by which junks coming up the river could find Foochow in its pirate-dodging retreat.

I went several times back to the old walled city, rain and Scotch mist alternating to make those early October days almost too cold even this far south, and covering the rickshaw-men with dark-brown rain-coats made of cocoanut-husk fibers, of which the Chinese make many things, to add to the somberness of the scene. Shops plying all manner of trades were wide open on the narrow streets,—silversmiths, half-naked coolies beating gold into leaves between heavy paper with big wooden mallets, fashioners of oiled silk, paper umbrellas, bright red "pillows"—of all the products for which Foochow is noted perhaps its lacquer-work, some of the processes of which are secret, is the most worthy of renown.

Among many masterpieces in this line the most striking I saw was a four-leaf screen that had just been finished in one of the principal shops of Tsung Tu How, the lacquer street. Against its beautiful black lacquered background it was decorated with reliefs of vases, flowers, and a host of other things dear to the Chinese heart, all carved out of *hoang yung* wood—if that means anything to you—very white and very hard indeed. But if you will have any clear conception of what a work it really was I must stand aside and leave the graphic description of it to photography. A man so unimportant that his name was no more attached to it than a coolie's to the ditch he digs had spent eight years making it. He was paid eighty cents in "small money" a day, "rain, shine, holidays, or revolution," as the owner of the shop put it, and his food and lodging; that is, rice and *tsai* and a plank to sleep on at the back of the shop. He worked every other hour of the twelve a day of the average Chinese craftsman, because eyes and nerves will not stand any more, and a false cut would waste much, perhaps ruin the whole thing. He could only make two such screens in his lifetime, because a man will be nearly thirty before he has learned to make them well, and by the time the second is finished his eyesight will no longer be equal to the task and he will become a mere coolie or be kicked out into the street with the beggars and the other outworn human animals of China. I could not help recalling by contrast our own workmen, with wages higher than the income of the average rich man in China, yet so often with no more artistic ability than interest in their work, and I fell to wondering if we could ever become such a nation as this, or even survive long in competition with an ancient civilization that can still produce men and things of this caliber.

Considering the time it had been in the making, the price of two

thousand "Mex" dollars the shop-owner asked for the screen did not seem exorbitant. It was the sort of thing that only the Chinese, or some collector of curious Oriental products, would want, but to them it would rank high among the precious but useless trash on which they spend so much for splendid workmanship. Emperors, mandarins, men of wealth used to roll agate and jade balls interminably between their fingers, sometimes under water, in order to render their touch more sensitive to the surfaces of such things as this, of faïences, porcelains; and it was from such as these that the shop-owner expected an offer for his new masterpiece. He had sent out large photographs of it to all the rich men he knew who might be interested, so that along with the tea he served us in the time-honored Chinese way he had not entirely overlooked those modern methods still rare in Chinese merchandising; but if he found a customer within a year or two he would be satisfied.

Not far from Foochow are three mountain peaks which to the people of that city look like as many lions. For protection from these they long since erected at an important sharp corner of the walled city three life-size stone "tigers," now as weather-blackened as its encircling wall. In fact the tiger seems to be one of the chief motifs in the religious decorations of Fukien, and Foochow has more than the usual number of colorful, life-sized—though not always lifelike—tigers, in whole or as bas-reliefs, about their temples. No doubt this is due to the presence of real tigers, of the Bengal variety, down in the southern part of the province, for though some of the people may have lost the original idea, it was surely that by worshiping him or showing him special honor they could lessen the desire of the great cat to harm them, just as they propitiate the myriad evil spirits, including those of their unappeased ancestors, of which so many Celestials still live and die in fear. Many have lost their lives in those jungles of the south, and of late years the place has become famous among big-game hunters for its "blue tiger." Chinese without number and at least one American—a missionary with a great reputation as a hunter; the two callings do not seem to be antipathetic—report having seen him. Evidently a Maltese freak among the larger cats, he is either an unusually savage man-eater or has been imbued with unusual savageness by the region's credulous inhabitants, but thus far not even our boldest hunters with their most modern methods have removed this terror of the province. Blue or otherwise, the Fukien tiger is a strange animal indeed if his

representations on temple walls and the like in Foochow are true to life.

Along the south coast of China there is almost a new dialect for every town; Foochow not merely speaks another language than Amoy, a hundred miles south in the same province, but cannot be understood in towns only a modern cannon-shot away. Of all the unmandarin dialects of China, too, this one seems to be least Chinese. Traveled Celestials have told me that they could understand all the people of China—"except Foochow," they always hastily added. This tongue of a probable remnant of a conquered race is not at all the language of Fukien Province; most of that speaks a kind of mandarin not hopelessly different from that of Peking. Even in Canton later I could now and then understand a word, but here I listened in vain for a single sound that resembled mandarin. Only Foochow and its immediate district, perhaps three million people, speak the Foochow dialect. Missionaries assigned there not only cannot attend the Nanking or Peking language school but are confined to one small area all their proselyting days; the man who learns the dialect of one town along the south coast is tongue-tied in another. I know Americans of extensive mission experience who can preach as long and as fluent a sermon in Foochowese as in English, yet who can no more make themselves understood anywhere else in China than if they had never crossed the Pacific. As in Denmark or Switzerland, however, the small compass of the language makes the educated class in Foochow inclined to learn other tongues, and I seldom had to go into more than two or three of the larger shops to find some one who spoke mandarin.

An American publishes a newspaper in the local dialect, though the editor of the "New York Times" might scorn to recognize him as a colleague. The missionaries have been more or less successful in reducing the Foochow speech to Roman letters, so that not only tracts but hymnals, testaments, and text-books in that form come forth from his establishment, though the newspaper clings to its characters. It appears six days a week, with a circulation of eleven hundred, costs its subscribers five "small dimes" (about twenty-two American cents) a month; fifty dimes a year in advance or sixty in retrospect; advertisements equally modest. Yet few Chinese pay by the year in advance, even though they are faithful subscribers to the one sheet that considers truth and news synonymous, for it is a more than common experience with Chinese newspapers to have them suddenly disappear. The publisher also has his risks, for the principal currency

of Foochow consists of tissue-paper notes of the local money-changers or small native banks, closely resembling laundry-bills and often written by hand, and as the issuing institutions have a way of failing overnight, one must change these shin-plasters for real money as early and as often as possible. That in itself was a task for a mathematical genius. Silver dollars being scarce and shin-plasters plentiful, the former exchanged just then for 1056 "cash," whereas the latter represented 1000 "cash" each and in colloquial speech were called dollars; thus strangers often paid more than the price they had been asked. Below that there were "double dimes" of what purported to be silver, coppers, "cash," and postage-stamps, and twelve dimes were equal to a "Mex" dollar, though not to a paper "dollar," and . . . But let us not get mired in the morass of Chinese currency; that way lies madness.

The Chinese type-setter's job, to come back to our newspaper, is not a sedentary occupation; it is an exaggerated form of pedestrianism. A font of type even for a newspaper has from four to five thousand characters, for books about thirty thousand, all of which the experienced type-setter knows by heart, and which he combines by tramp-ing constantly from one end of the room to the other. If our printers had to walk forty feet between a "t" and an "h" and back again to an "e" no doubt their unions would see to it that nothing whatever was left for the mere author. No one, I believe, has yet threatened to take the rice out of the Celestial type-setter's mouth by inventing a Chinese linotype machine. The compositors of Foochow, and throughout China, get less in a year than do many American union skilled laborers in a week; no, I am not exaggerating. In the establishment of which I am speaking the best compositors were paid 10,000 "cash" in shin-plasters a month, or about \$4.20 gold. True, rice is somewhat cheaper in Foochow than in New York. Chinese newspapers paid their employees less than that, and managed to keep them in debt so that they could not quit. It is enough of a *tour de force* to get these men to set up their own dialect in Roman letters, but much more so for the English and other Western-language newspapers published in China to get out the very creditable work they do with compositors who seldom have the faintest idea what the words mean or how they are pronounced.

I dropped into a court-room one morning, quite voluntarily. The judge was a native of Foochow, but as he held an official position and was in theory appointed by Peking, he had to speak *gwun hwa*, the "official speech" that we call mandarin—either from the Portuguese

*mandare* (to command) or because the *Manjoe-ren* or Manchu men ruled China when Westerners first came into general contact with it. The judge found this difficult, but red tape bound him even tighter than that. He was required to work through an official "interpreter," also a native of Foochow, who put into abominable mandarin the testimony given in the judge's mother-tongue, which every one concerned used exclusively outside the court-room, and he had to put his own questions in such mandarin as he could muster and let the interpreter relay them on to the witness in the speech of Foochow. If I did not misunderstand, this judge was the secretary of a higher judge, just as the interpreter was officially the secretary of this one. Above him there was a Provincial Superior Court and a Supreme Court of last appeal at Peking—in theory; in practice the court of last appeal in China is the local military dictator.

Foochow has bobbed so pendulum-like between the North and the South that to keep in mind even the names of the succeeding generals would be a serious task. Few if any of them have had anything but their armed force to recommend them; though Admiral Sah, the popular son of Foochow who was just then civil governor of the province, seemed prepared to give an honest and probably an efficient government if he had the power his position gave him in theory. He was the first Chinese high official I had met who spoke good English, or any English at all, unless some were effectively hiding their lights under very dull-looking bushels. Most of the Tuchuns and governors who had received me not only spoke no Western tongue but were hardly acquainted with the hand-shake; for when I extended my hand they were certain, after an instant of hesitation, to grasp me firmly by the upraised thumb—perhaps because that is the Chinese gesture for *ting hao*, "very good"—and to cling to it with welcoming tenacity. The admiral was educated in England, where he had learned among other things to speak frankly rather than wallow in nonsense for courtesy's sake, and if I am any judge of men he would give any part of China he really commanded such a government as none of it has seen in decades. But though his marines in khaki were as great a contrast in deportment as in appearance to the gray-cotton-clad rowdies posing as Chinese soldiers, the admiral, like most of the civil governors in post-Yuan-Shih-kai China, was almost pathetically powerless compared with a military governor of quite a different type.

The provincial prison was rude but airy, spacious, and well lighted, its courtyards full of flowers, bamboos, and trees; soldiers had recently

used it as a barrack and most of the prisoners had escaped. The civil governor apologized for the condition of the place before he let me visit it, and the warden tried to take up all my time with tea drinking. As we were nearly an hour over the tea-cups, I do not know how many things were fixed up for visitors before I was taken on the rounds. It might have been far worse, though I should like to be out of China when extraterritoriality is abolished and I might be shut up in such a place until the local judge saw fit to release me, instead of only until the American consul in Nantai could be notified.

China to-day seems to be no place for political men of high ideals. I talked with a teacher in the mission high school of the incessant clock-tower, a graduate, a Christian, and a former instructor there, who had once been appointed magistrate of his own town up the river. The military forced him to get them \$80,000 a month, besides gathering at least that amount themselves, mainly illegally, and he had to send \$30,000 a month to Foochow. From so small a place as his this meant robbery and confiscation rather than merely the old-fashioned squeeze of officials. Then he must impress coolies and commandeer boats whenever the military chose, and the coolies and boatmen were not paid or even fed, and many died by the wayside. His predecessor had shut the city gates to keep him out and when he tired of his position the people shut them to keep him in. Even the governor refused to let him go—until he got back his old post at the school and the foreign missionary influence made it impossible to hold him. No doubt the higher official saved his face by mumbling the old saying, "Well, of course we can't stand in the way of your advancement."

Foochow had a capacious "baby tower," which stood on the edge of town, and the paths to it were almost covered over with vegetation; but it was in use, as the visitor's nose quickly informed him. It was a trying job to peer inside it,—a granite receptacle of urn shape, like that at Shaohsing, with an elaborate top, into which babies, or at least their corpses, wrapped in rags or matting, are hastily thrown through a side opening. There were at least a dozen putrefying little corpses in it, almost melting together, an Eden for big blue flies and for the dogs that often live in these "towers" or in the holes that serve as hasty graves with or without poor thin little coffins. Some of those who bring babies there evidently drop them lazily or out of fear in the high grass near-by; there were some disgusting rags in the paths leading to it, though dogs had made away with the bodies. Pious persons "acquire merit" by building these receptacles, and coolies are



paid to clean them out occasionally, but it was evident that they were shirking the job, like so many Chinese government employees.

Millions of the Chinese believe that if a child dies before it cuts its teeth—some authorities say up to the age of four or five—it was not a child at all but merely an evil spirit. Until that time a baby has no soul and must be watched to make sure that it is what it pretends to be; to let it die on your hands is as dangerous as for a man to die on your threshold, for the evil spirit will always haunt you and any real children you may have. Hence it must be got rid of before it dies. No more absurd, of course, than the kindred superstition that a child is damned for original sin until it is baptized, but in China customs are prone to be more brutal than in the West. Thus it may be a dying boy as well as an unwanted girl that is thrown into one of these “baby towers” still fairly numerous at least in southern China. The cost of a funeral is also to be considered, even though the burying of a child is a great contrast to the care that is taken with the bodies of adults; thus those not driven to it by poverty now and then get rid of dead or dying babies merely to save themselves the expense and bother of a regular interment. It was officially reported, by the way, that 800 children a month were being stolen in southern Fukien and sold in Amoy, most of them for arms. The standard price was \$3 for each year of age for girls; boys unquoted.

There are many mission schools in Foochow, among others American Methodist institutions from kindergarten to university, which reminds me that missionaries of that faith proudly point out a simple, well-preserved little church or chapel, curiously Latin-American in such architecture as it has, on a principal street of old Foochow, as the first mission building erected in China; no doubt they mean the first Protestant one, even if our national love of superlatives has not betrayed these models of rectitude into further unintentional exaggeration. Some of these schools touch our national life more closely than we suspect. One diligent American of long missionary practice in Foochow runs a boys' industrial school in which manual departments furnish those so un-Chinese as to want it an opportunity to pay for their schooling by half-time labor. Some earn their way entirely; a whole year at the school costs twenty-five “Mex” dollars. There is no labor-union feeling among the missionaries, so that they not only work after the whistle blows but they permit pupils to compete with working-men outside rather than go hungry for food or instruction.

But what I started to say was that many Americans no doubt re-

member the quill toothpicks once furnished with every meal on our railway diners. It was the Chinese boys of this American mission school in Foochow who used to cut them, from duck-feathers bought in the open market, and they were paid five and a half "small dimes" a thousand for them—about twenty-two toothpicks for an American cent. The best worker among the boys could cut 8000 quills in a working day of eight hours; the average, 6000 to 7000. But alas, that source of education has been taken away from youthful Foochow. Whether an esthetic wave, akin to the banishing of the stove-side sawdust-box from country stores, has swept over our railway dining service, or some new constitutional amendment has made this nicety of travel a felony, so that toothpicks are served now only to those who know the password or the secret grip, or whether the poverty-stricken dining-car services of America have been forced to do away with this extraneous expense to make up for the abysmally low prices at which they serve their food to the spoiled traveling public, the fact remains that the poor boys of Foochow must now turn to some other means of earning their schooling.

Fukien Christian University, on the banks of the Min four miles below river-side Foochow, is not only interesting in itself as a large American institution in process of development, but is a good starting-point for a day's tramp among the mountains of Kushan behind it. A coolie may be needed to show the way among the paths that crisscross the first rounded slope of that cluster of hills, standing out against the sky-line across the plain beyond the city, as well as to carry one's bundle; but once on the stone road, in places laid in broad low steps wider than any city street, by which thousands of pilgrims climb yearly to the celebrated monasteries above, you can dismiss him if he curbs your poetic spirit—provided it would not be even more curbed by the bundle that you must in that case transfer to your own shoulders. Such a trip is always delightful after a sojourn in a Chinese city, with all its iniquities to the five or more senses. So far as pilgrimages are concerned I became as ardent a Buddhist-Taoist-Confucianist as the most pious of Chinese, for the peace and quiet of their holy places—or at least of the ways to them—are all that the soul could demand. Magnificent breezes swept across the hillsides; trees, flowers, stillness, birds, a view far up as well as down the Min past Pagoda Anchorage—where ocean-going steamers including Foochow in their itinerary anchor nine miles below the city at the lower end of

that long island about which the river splits—alone make the climb well worth while.

Something less than two hours of climbing just steep enough to be good sport in the brilliant summer that had come again after several dull and rainy days brought me to the old Kushan monastery, holiest in Fukien, its many buildings piled in terraces up the mountain-side among evergreen groves flitting with birds, here and there a small wild animal, for the Buddhist monasteries of China are protectors of life, even of trees. Beyond elaborate gates is a large square pond with cut-stone border and thick opaque water in which fish are kept, not of course that the monks may regale themselves on brain-food, but that they may acquire merit and duly advance with each rebirth by protecting them. In a shaded spot by the pond-side sits a coolie with biscuits—Chinese fish seem to prefer bread to rice—which pious Chinese or curious foreigners buy at two or three for a copper—several times the town price, but let that pass—and toss them into the pool. The first may possibly be snatched by a single fish, but the semi-sacred creatures, mainly carp and many weighing surely twenty or thirty pounds, are so used to being fed by newly arrived climbers that they come in shoals like the throngs about a successful politician the day after election. They follow the new-comer along the usual feeding side of the pool, but not far around the next corner, for they are lazy and fat with good living, and if one cannot feed them where they are accustomed to receive their tribute, he may go to, without their blessing. By the third or fourth biscuit so many have gathered that whole masses are lifted above the surface and if one throws biscuits fast enough the pond seems boiling with fish.

It was nearing dinner-time for the monks when I began wandering just before noon through the courts of the monastery, laid in steps up the hillside above the pond, and decorated with flowers and blooming shrubs, as well as with various garments in the more or less faded bluish gray of Chinese Buddhist bonzes and soldiers, hung out to dry in irreverent places and attitudes. I entered a vast kitchen where novices, and perhaps a few purely lay employees, were cooking great hogshead-like vats of steaming rice and smaller ones of *tsai*. In an adjoining large room, its heavy frame-and-paper doors, poked full of holes, so wide open that there was little front left to the building, inmates were gathered along the plain uncovered wooden tables. At least the majority, who had passed their prime, looked more like a bread-line gathering than like esthetes who had spent a lifetime meditating on the

meaninglessness of existence and the unimportance of earthly things, including rice; perhaps the better class and those who have risen to higher rank ate in their own quarters. Attendants brought the rice in wooden tubs, out of which they shoveled it with a come-and-get-it manner recalling army life, after some one had beaten on a board in lieu of blowing a bugle. If the cooks and servers had much the same outlook on life and feeling for the rank and file as the kitchen police of our military organizations, many of the waiting monks, with their food before them but unable to touch it until a preliminary rite had been accomplished, struck me as like the bums gathered in some religious asylum in a Western land waiting for the "damned nonsense"—in the shape of prayers, sermon, hymn, or whatever of the kind must be endured in order to get the benefits of the charity—to be over so that they could fall upon the real reason for their presence.

The ceremony was performed by a young monk, the twelve round scars in three even rows on his skull showing quite new through his recently shaven head. Evidently the eighth day of the fourth or the sixth moon on which these signs of sanctity are burned with sticks of incense on the pates of novices, thenceforth full-fledged monks, who must not flinch if they are not to lose face with all the attendant monks and such of the pious as are there on pilgrimage, was still so recent in this case that he took his calling very seriously. When all the inmates along the rows of tables—many lapses like missing teeth suggesting that some had gone off to the flesh-pots of the town—had each a bowl of rice and a small one of vegetables before him and waited with the half-bored, half-ravenous expression of the charity beneficiaries above mentioned, the young monk took a bowl of rice, marched out upon the veranda to an isolated stone pillar about five feet high and upholding nothing visible, a novice youth not yet decorated with the spotted head following at his heels, and with a series of incantations and kowtows he spooned a handful of boiled rice out upon the pillar, made a sign of invitation to the birds already swirling about his head, and returned inside. The feeding of the birds is as fixed a ceremony in the best Buddhist monasteries of China as are the rules of strict vegetarianism and of never eating from noon until the next dawn. The latter was no doubt the reason the bread-line monks along the tables looked so longingly and regretfully into their bowls when they had wolfed the contents, as if wondering whether, contrary to the experience of their years of residence in the establishment, their ardent glances would not fill them again. No such

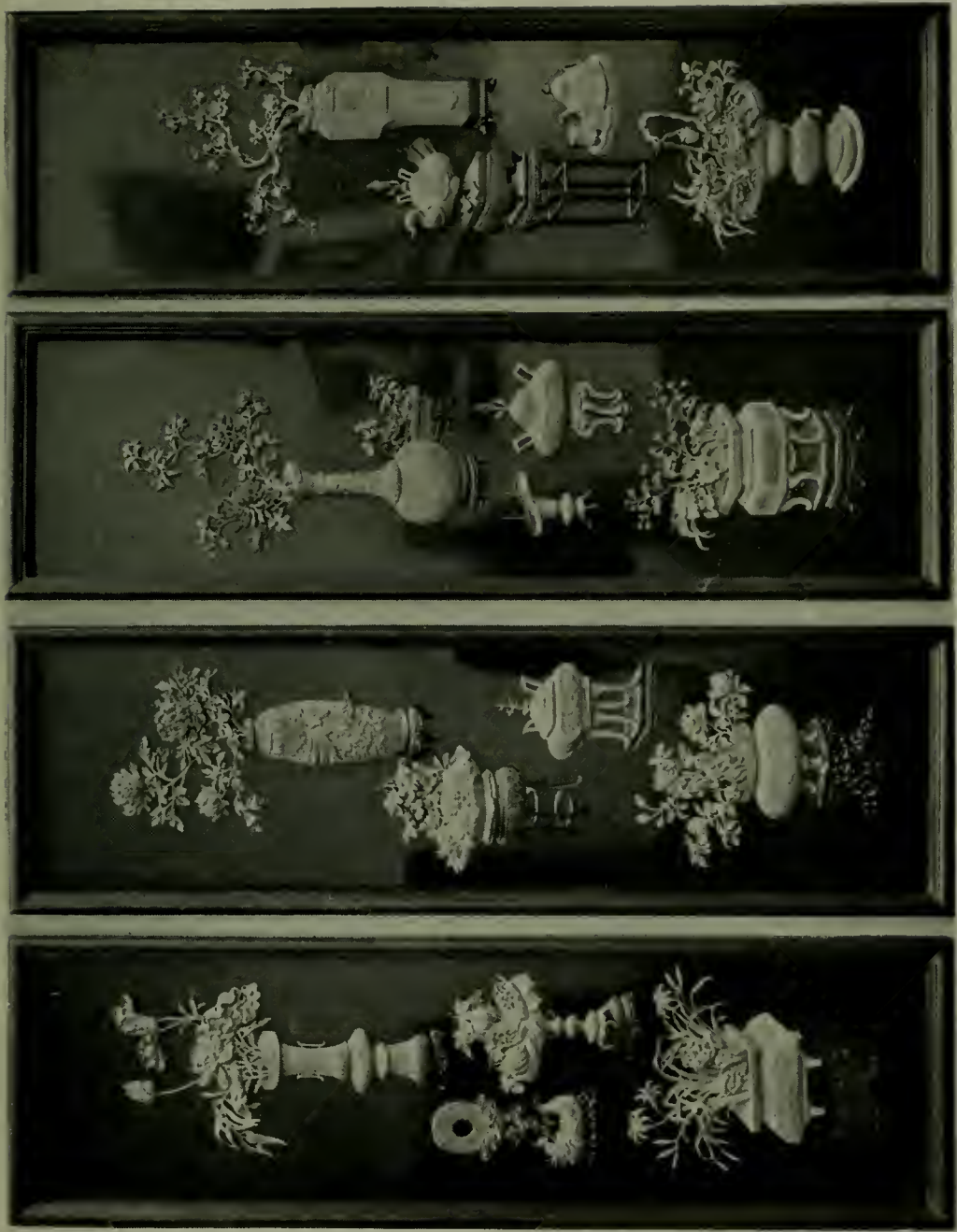
miracle happened, and one by one they wandered out, leaving the bowls with the chop-sticks falsely on the tables beside them; for that means, "I have had enough," whereas if they had told the truth that stood forth so plainly in their faces and manner they would have left them lying across the tops of the bowls, which is Chinese convention for Oliver Twist's bold plea. Then the kitchen-police-mannered youths came from the caverns of the boiling rice-vats to gather them up as hastily as an untipped waiter snatches away the plate on which a Western diner has laid his knife and fork, for the cafeteria method of saving servants is not likely to come into vogue in China so long as men are as cheap there as they are to-day.

The golden Buddhas were in excellent repair, and though I was the only pilgrim that day, other signs suggested that the pious take proper care of Kushan. Delightful walks led up and down among the evergreen trees, so long protected that they have reached a maturity and size rare in China. Huge boulders and precipitous rock cliffs along the temple paths were carved with idols and sacred texts. I suppose Chinese characters carved in rocks do not look as unsightly even to those who can read them as our gum and cigarette advertisements do to us; or perhaps, as similar propaganda with which Westerners have covered temple and city walls throughout the land suggest, the written word is always sacred to the Chinese; certainly for those of us to whom all but the simplest of their ideographs have no more meaning than any other decorative designs they are more pleasing than otherwise. An older monk and a novice loafed about each of the more distant buildings, less as caretakers than as performers of the required religious rites, without much interest, unless their faces prevaricated, in anything but their fairly well-fed ease. Ingenious contrivances cut down their slight duties. In one of the more isolated little temples a large wooden fish was so hung that a falling stream of water made it strike with its snout at short intervals a large bell, thereby not only honoring Buddha without human effort, since each stroke is much like a turn of the Tibetan's prayer-wheel, but ministering to the Chinese love of constant noise.

The little valleys of Kushan beyond the monastery precincts are terraced into productive rice-fields, with blue mountain ranges stretching away on either hand. Another hour over the hills through more evergreen groves and mammoth black boulders brought me to Kuliang, the summer home of foreigners, mainly missionaries, of Foochow district, a little place both in size and altitude compared with Kuling.

It lies among hills in places beautiful with flowers and trees and broken terraces to the very tops, from which can be seen the ocean on one side and on the other the Min from the anchorage, where a dozen tiny steamers sit clustered together like fearful children, past the great island on the extreme hilly edge of which the foreigners have their settlement, and on up the river, dotted with sails as far as eyes could reach in either direction, to the gulf-like expanse where the typhoon had set me ashore. Great ranges lie on every hand, those near-by with sheer rock faces and steep slopes down which water-courses had carved figures as fantastic as Chinese characters cut by hand. The summer houses, abandoned now for the year, are in the midst of terraced rice-fields and a scattered Chinese hamlet, so that their proselyting occupants can keep in touch with the people during the torrid months. All of them are low one-story cottages of cut stone, with a huge stone wall surrounding them on the two sides facing the ocean, and wherever possible they are dug well into the hillsides. These "typhoon walls" hugging the houses closely are indispensable at Kuliang, for especially in the summer season the storms that sweep over this coast are so violent that without such shelters even stone buildings have been wrecked up here on the hillsides.

A stone road in such excellent condition as to prove that it depended on the foreigners of the hilltop led in almost constant steps down to the plain of Foochow below. All this, the old city, and its several outgrowths along the river, were in full view during the whole descent, the vast plain stretching from the foot of the precipices below one mighty unripened rice-field, crisscrossed by wandering flagstone paths and shallow streams like cracks in some great green Kingtehchen platter, dotted everywhere with compact clumps of villages about every stony hillock rising abruptly from the general dead level, their reddish-brown color contrasting with the almost black mass of walled Foochow and the thin line of buildings connecting it with its suburbs on the Min. It all looked so simple and un contemplated from up here, like life as seen from some lofty position, so different when you get down into it and try to find your way among the wandering stone paths, patterns, motives. Dagger-wearing "field women" climbing the hill under heavy burdens recalled the advantage their sturdy calves give them over the majority of Chinese women, but if they also were to bind their feet one would not meet, as I did, grandmothers carrying full-sized telegraph-poles up this mighty stairway. I walked into Nantai by five in the afternoon of the day I had left it for the



A workman of Foochow spent eight years making this lacquer screen of carved hardwood



At the annual autumn fête of Confucius group after group of school-boys, each in charge of a teacher, came to bow low three times before the altar-house of the ancient sage



Before the altar of Confucius lay a goat, a bullock, and a pig, dressed and shaven except for the heads. On the "aroma" of these the spirit of the sage is expected to feast, after which the more earthly portions are eaten by the living



university, which for some reason seemed to give my legs a great local reputation.

The tardiness of a steamer that had run for shelter from the typhoon to which I owed my first tramp into Foochow kept me there long enough to see the autumn festival in honor of Confucius, which in that Year of the Pig took place on Sunday, October 7. The principal streets of the old walled city through which the procession went were draped with endless strips of colored cloth hung like sunshades down their centers. Earlier in the week when I had visited the temple of Confucius it had been as placid and quiet a place as you could find in China, as dead as a Christian church on a week-day. On this great day when every Chinese city of any importance or pride honors the ancient sage there had come many of the chief citizens, most of the school-boys, and many others to do reverence to his memory. The school-boys were in special costumes, much like those in which ancient Chinese worthies are represented in statues at the tomb-temples in their honor, and at the height of the ceremony they held before their faces the "blinding-wand" that all such carry in order not to be so impolite as to look upon the object of their veneration. The throngs under the portico of the main temple were dressed in the richest garments of their respective ranks, many of them entirely of silk, the folds still in them, for it is the educated and the élite who put their trust in Confucius instead of in the cruder forms of Taoism and a Sinofied Buddhism. There were few if any women; no school-girls. It was a calm and collected crowd, with none of the emotional excitement seen in the Chinese temples of the rank and file, no fortune-tellers, no priests selling tissue-paper prayers, almost none of the customary Chinese hocus-pocus except some fire-crackers.

There was much beating of discordant drums and torturing of strange instruments while the man whose hereditary job it is, though he is not a member of the K'ung or Confucius family, to arrange the spring and autumn festivals set the ceremony in motion. At length the local officials, starting with the most important that had been induced to come, marched into the center of the big stone-paved court, green with trees, flowers, and the grass between the stones, and bowed low three times at the main temple, before which the smoke of incense was rising. The principal officials were not there; the year before they had come but did not kneel as in the past, and thus the old order changes even in unchanging China. Line after line of school-boys just

long enough to reach across the court came next, a teacher in charge of each group, the pupils bowing low with him three times in unison, at shouts from the master of ceremonies on the portico, their solemn faces a contrast to the giggling, chattering, and horse-play with which they gathered and dispersed. There was no real kowtowing—kneeling and touching the forehead to the earth—such as was universal not so long ago, for even the school-boys seemed to take their cue from the absent officials.

Perhaps the most striking part of the whole performance from our Western point of view was the material offerings to Confucius—or to his spirit, for I have no flair for the niceties in these religious matters—set before his richly colored statue and spirit-tablet in the main room of the temple. The interior of this hall was not merely decorated but had been swept and dusted, a sure sign that this was a most important Chinese occasion. Two large and two small musical instruments much like what the Japanese call a *samisen* were prominently displayed, and on square tables of heavy mahogany-colored wood before the altar lay a slaughtered goat, a bullock, and a pig, all drawn and as cleanly shaven as the skull of a Buddhist priest on festival days, except that their heads had been left untouched. On the “aroma” of these the spirit of the sage is expected to feast, as common ancestors do on that of more ordinary viands, after which in this case as in the other the more earthly portions of the carcasses would be partaken of by the living.

“The superior man is dignified but does not wrangle; social, but not a partizan. He does not promote a man simply because of his words; nor does he put good words aside because of the man,” said Confucius; or, as it was popularized by Chuang Tze, “A dog is not considered a good dog because he is a good barker, nor a man a good man because he is a good talker.”

“The wise man does not afflict himself because he is not known by man but for not knowing man.”

Learning, undigested by thought, is labor lost; thought, unassisted by learning, is perilous. It is only the man with the most perfect moral nature who is able to combine in himself quickness of apprehension, intelligence, insight, and understanding, qualities necessary for the exercise of command; magnanimity, generosity, benignity, and gentleness, qualities necessary for the exercise of patience; originality, energy, strength of character, and determination, qualities necessary for the exercise of endurance; dignity, noble seriousness,

order, and regularity, qualities necessary for the exercise of self-respect; grace, method, delicacy, and lucidity, qualities necessary for the exercise of critical judgment"—one does not have to listen long to the great Chinese sage to understand why he is most honored by the classes and above the head of the masses.

## CHAPTER VIII

### LOAFING ALONG THE SOUTHERN COAST

**A**MOY, as foreigners call the next stop westward from Pagoda Anchorage of coastwise steamers, lies directly on the sea and is reputed to have the best Chinese harbor that foreign powers have not taken over. At that, foreigners hold the rocky island of Kulangsu behind which ships drop anchor. This isolated international settlement also has a municipal council elected by the rate-payers—just then there were three American, two British, and one Japanese members—but the real rulers are the American, British, and Japanese consuls, whose nationals make up, in numbers increasing in this order, most of the foreign population of the island. Sixty Chinese policemen, mainly from Shantung, well uniformed, armed, and disciplined in contrast to their colleagues on Chinese soil, guard all its landing-places and salute all white men. Nor are they mere figureheads. A general who is a great power over in Amoy proper came across to Kulangsu and tried to collect taxes on the chairmen, the only means of transportation on the island for those unable to walk, and was arrested by a simple Shantung policeman. Many another Chinese who lords it over his fellows on the mainland has been similarly astounded by being relieved of his arms as he set foot on the sea-girt foreign settlement.

Piled up in a great mass of those granite boulders that give all Amoy district a resemblance to Rio de Janeiro, though it lacks the boldness and tropical vegetation needed to make it a rival in scenic beauty, the island, a mile or more long by half as wide, has the appearance under certain conditions of a half-submerged camel. Enormous granite rocks larger than the box-like foreign residences, business houses, and undistinguished mission buildings that rise three or more stories above the rocky ground ceded to the foreigners as worthless culminate in peaks and grottoes that were long ago places of pilgrimage, many of them carved with huge characters dating from pre-foreigner days. The commonplace aspect of the buildings is relieved by the picturesque way they are strewn about and among and upon these immense rocks. Even here most of the inhabitants are Chinese; a

long narrow street leads up from the principal landing through a Chinese town different only in its half-serious attention to sanitation; wealthy Celestials have more extensive estates, with elaborate dwellings along the beaches, than the foreigners even of the oil- and cigarette-selling class.

The real Amoy is also on an island, though that is so large that you might not suspect it, half a mile away over the deep-blue harbor across which foreign residents commute to the city proper by countless little sampans, with the split tails of swallows and gaily decorated, mainly in red, which flit in constant files across the windy bay, usually under sail in either direction, though now and then the men have to row gondola fashion. Once, when tax-gatherers threatened to license them in Chinese jurisdiction also, the boatmen refused for days to leave the foreign island and made life miserable for those who dared cross the harbor from the city proper. Here, too, are great heaps of rounded granite boulders, among and through and above the houses, trees splitting their way out of them. Like Rio, Amoy has stone enough to build itself forever; the stone-cutters' hammers are rarely silent, and they have become so expert that they can take out a stone anywhere, splitting away a whole or half boulder without disturbing the mud houses clustered like swallows' nests among them.

Built on solid rock it is hard for Amoy to dispose of its dead. Out where the city wall climbs and twists and squirms its way over rocky hills lie thousands of flat cemented-over graves, so thickly that a goat can scarcely set down a foot between them. Great hillsides are solid stretches of these stone-like curved tops of graves, blending into the general granite-boulder aspect of the town; I have never seen the dead so closely planted anywhere, unless it be in the Spanish style of pigeonholes. A few of these grave-crowded hillsides were being reclaimed. When new land must be had the skeletons were pulled out wherever they had been buried in earth and put each in an earthenware jar, to be buried elsewhere by the descendants, or after a time by the authorities. Corpses were found four deep in some places; often the jars stand long uncovered, and rotten coffin-boards, broken skulls, and scattered bones kick about under the feet of dogs and men.

Not merely are there no rickshaws in Amoy but there has never been a wheel of any description there, except on passing steamers. Bound feet are not so rare as in other south coast cities, nor unknown even among young girls; but the cues I had almost forgotten turned out to belong to Shantung coolies running little outdoor shows and

speaking a familiar language. The filth and the noise and the irresponsible fellows in ragged uniforms, but with very modern rifles, lounging on every corner, sleeping in every hole, I shall pass over in silence, beyond the remark that Amoy runs its rivals a close race in this regard. The tea grown in the southern Fukien hills goes out through Amoy; in a shallow bay on one side of town there stand out of the mud at low tide hundreds of upright granite blocks like Western tombstones, on which oysters are grown. But the only unique industry Amoy and its island seem to boast is the making of toy cats, dogs, lions, tigers, and even more fearsome beasts from mud gaudily painted, the heads and tails so balanced that they wag gravely back and forth.

I came upon a man in Amoy proper who with his ancestors had for generations made with rare perfection those tiny figures taken from Chinese legend and theater that one here and there sees fashioned in the streets. Made of rice-flour, each mass of dough colored a vivid green, red, blue, and so on with German dyes, the figures, about four inches long, are each spitted on a little stick, which when twirled between thumb and forefinger makes them kick up their legs and wave their arms like whirling dervishes. Since these parts must be made movable, and the beards, eyes, hands, and a score of other parts of the faces and costumes must each be of dough of a different color, one hardly saw how the man could get rich so long as he sold them at five cents "small money" each, above all with rice now at famine prices. He worked with his son in the little mud hovel that had served his father and grandfather before him, producing forty figures a day when he worked steadily, setting them up in holes in a board to dry. As he was the only expert, there was a ready sale for all he could make; imitators made them, too, but theirs usually cracked even before they dried. He could have made more, one gathered, but being a true, even though unconscious, artist he insisted on always doing his best. The work was entirely free-hand; as the man put it, with his constant smile and an occasional gesture of his rough workman hands with a suggestion of the suppleness of the artist in the fingers, he just made what was in his heart. Real artists neither live in palaces nor wear silks in China. More than once I have seen one who outwardly was only a ragged coolie in a dirty street, sitting at a makeshift bench or table making these fantastic stage figures of colored dough on whirling sticks, or something else as intricate and full of life, while the crowd surged, children jostled and fingered, men quarreled noisily about him, and still his deft fingers plodded on, copying some artistic little thing

directly from generations of memory and selling them at a copper or two each.

These Amoy trinkets were surprisingly durable, though here was yet another case of much labor spent on material not worthy of it. In the West we consider this a great waste of labor, but in China it is not work but material that is expensive, which is visibly the reason why almost everything made in China, from its Great Wall and its imperial palaces to its elaborate embroideries on poor grass-cloth and its high polish on soft or knotted wood, is so perishable. The impermanence of Chinese material things is one of China's surprises for those who know it as the oldest enduring civilization. The Chinese workman will go to much trouble to make a finely varnished table or chair, a richly painted god, of wood hardly fit for fuel; he will make an axle with a knot in the center, where it cannot but break at the first strain; he is forever laboriously covering up faults in his material, not because he was created trickier than the rest of mankind, but merely because during centuries of precious materials and cheap human beings he has unconsciously come to do his work as if he were trying to save jobs for the succeeding generation.

The civilization of the Chinese is permanent, as human institutions go in this world; their material things are impermanent. Does one follow from the other? Materials being expensive and labor cheap, thus causing rebuilding in every generation, does the civilization survive because each generation has to learn the art in order to keep up the crumbling monuments? In granite lands things last so long that by the time they need repair or rebuilding there is no one left who can do it. Whereas other races, such as the Khmers who built the now jungle-throttled palaces at Angkor in Cambodia, have lost all knowledge for rebuilding the great monuments of their forebears, the Chinese, using materials that do not last, retain their knowledge from generation to generation. Almost any French or Italian, even Japanese province, is richer in architecture reaching well back into the past, in things that carry us back to a remoter antiquity, than is ancient China. The answer is mainly difference in materials; for if China has been exposed to forces of destruction more frequent and more implacable than elsewhere—atrocious intestine wars, religious persecutions, periodic invasions of barbarians, scourges of nature which discourage man or sweep away his works—if the universal Chinese negligence plays its part, the rest of the world, too, has had its share of these things. If the cathedrals of Europe fell to pieces

every twenty years, would not their people know better how to make them still, instead of weakly recopying or patching them? They might even have kept up an initiative that would produce new marvels of architecture; though that has not been the result even in China.

One of the troubles of Amoy was that it is just across the straits from Formosa. It was another case of the injustice of extraterritoriality that "Formosans," as the Chinese immigrants to that island are miscalled—most of them from Amoy a few generations back, so that they could talk to the people, though the Chinese from the north could not—had all the rights of Japanese subjects. So strong was the position of the Amoy Chinese who had returned from Formosa as Japanese that the wide streets recently cut through the densely congested section of the old city had to twist and squirm in order to avoid "Formosan" properties, which the dictator himself dare not molest. Chinese riffraff from the neighboring Japanese island lorded it over the Amoy officials; they kept weapons, robbed and murdered almost at will. If arrested and turned over to the Japanese consul they were often quickly released; lately some of the worst of them had been sent back to Formosa—for a month!—and not a few had returned on the next steamer. Rumor has it that the Japanese long hoped to get a strip of the mainland opposite their big southern island, and that they still resent failing to do so. At length the people of Amoy took the matter into their own hands and provided the central attraction of several "Formosan" funerals, and when the Japanese consul threatened to land marines the local dictator had five more Chinese subjects of the mikado executed and told him to make the most of it. Six war-ships arrived, but the Japanese could not then afford to appear as aggressors against China, and on the morning I arrived they were steaming away, after coming to some less aggressive understanding.

I have it that the American consul was stricter with the many Philippine citizens in Amoy, mainly Chinese born in our islands. One met them now and then exchanging Manila paper pesos in the money-shops; on the wharf peddlers with street-stands offered for sale American army "monkey caps," the contract number and the name of the maker and "U. S. 1918" still upon them, but though they were much cheaper than they had been to Uncle Sam there seemed to be few buyers.

Sixty thousand coolies a year are said to leave Amoy district on the coolie-ships that carry them to Manila, Java, and the Straits Settlement, and only forty thousand come back. Some do not return for a vital reason, others because they find life so much better abroad as





Not a denizen of our cotton belt but a Chinese workman with the crudest known form of the water-pipe



It is a common pastime, or duty, of Chinese gentlemen to take their birds out for a daily airing



The typhoon and tidal wave that struck Swatow not only wiped out many houses and thousands of people but left whole streets so shaky that braces across them are necessary



The central portion of the famous bridge of Chauchowfu is made up of boats that swing aside when passage up or down the river is needed

to offset the Chinese longing to come home before they die; still others, because, like so many of us, they put things off too long. Those who make fortunes abroad usually return to dazzle the eyes of their fellow-townsmen. One such was a barber who made millions in sugar in Java. Now, the barbers of China, as well as their female counterparts, the old women who pull the hairs out of feminine foreheads between two taut threads, are one of the lowest castes, almost outcasts, like actors and women of the streets. This seems unjust, for they are versatile and industrious: not merely do they shave their clients completely above the shoulders, dig out their ears and scrape the inside of their eyelids, the while gazing calmly up and down the street from their hovel or shaded corner, but they are experienced osteopaths, bending their victims over their knees and macerating their bodily troubles out of them in a way to make any Western masseur take to planting potatoes for a living. Moreover, they do all this at fees so low that when foreign residents in the interior call in a native barber, soak his instruments, though not the barber himself, in disinfecting lysol, and submit to his ministrations, they pay him fourteen times as much, by actual arithmetic, for trimming their hair as he gets for the whole process, down to gouging out the eyes, from a Chinese client and still do not feel that they have been overcharged. The fact remains that the Celestial barber is looked down upon by his fellow-men, and though this fortunate son of Amoy built himself a palatial house over in Amoy proper, he rarely leaves his mansion on Kulangsu. Not only did his old neighbors look down upon him, but he found the foreigners' island his only protection from Chinese "law"—for the dictators of China outdo even our own governments in confiscating wealth.

But after all, this was just a rich old man given over to women, gambling, and opium. In rare enough contrast to such normal returned emigrants is the case of a man still not old who has a big business in Singapore. Though he made his fortune unassisted, by old Chinese custom it belongs also to a younger brother. Deciding to do something for his old home town not far from Amoy, he called in this surviving member of the family and offered to make an even division of the property before he set his schemes in motion. The brother insisted on sharing in the plan also, and now he handles the business in Singapore while the elder "chops" his expenditures at home. With the Chinese clan system the old home town seems almost a part of the family, and there is much more affection for it than among those of us who look upon our birthplaces as just another brief alighting spot. The village elders advised the man from Singapore to spend his money on religion. So

he rebuilt an old Buddhist temple much venerated by the people, but waited in vain for results. Concluding that religion was not the answer, he turned his attention to education. The gentry and the village fathers who had seen him go away almost a common laborer said that no education was needed there; the bulk of the villagers had never had it and they did not want it now. None would sell him land for a school, even at a fat profit. Finally, to get rid of him, they told him he might have an old pond. He filled this in and now has a group of modern school buildings where in his youth the village caught its fish.

Then he picked up somewhere the strange idea that the mothers as well as the fathers of the next generation should go to school. The people of this village said it was foolish, if not immoral, to educate a girl. She would soon be married, and until then the parents wanted her at home to help earn back some of the cost of raising her for some other family to which she would soon be turned over. The man asked how much the girls earned. "Two dollars small silver a month," replied the parents. He forthwith began paying them that amount for attending his school. Later, realizing that it was necessary to catch the children very young, he started a kindergarten, hiring a woman who was getting \$6 a month for working non-union hours in a British mission and paying her \$30 for teaching from nine to four. The man himself professes no religion, but in the beginning at least he had to get his women teachers from mission schools, because there was nowhere else to get them. His latest undertaking was just nearing completion when I visited it at the far end of the native town outside the city wall,—a big university campus surrounded by modern buildings of Amoy granite, already overrun with young men studying under an almost entirely foreign-trained faculty, including several foreigners. All this the man pays for out of his own pocket, and there is much dispute among those genuinely interested in the future of China as to "how he got that way," to the end that others of his race may be similarly inoculated.

But the Chinese themselves do not stand by him. Rumors insist that the contractors cheated outrageously on the university buildings; the extreme ornamentation, the temple-style third stories in which the students may have elaborate feasts in Chinese fashion, and the similar things which foreigners find so wasteful are probably chargeable to the man's own taste. The local dictator was making life miserable for him with taxes and "borrowings," giving no protection in return. Altruism is not

a common failing among the Chinese; it is suspected at best, and under present anarchistic conditions it is like flashing signals of welcome to all the miscreants within sight. Latest reports have it that the students have been chased out of most of the new university and the buildings given over to the foul nests of soldiers.

The general aspect of the next treaty-port along the south coast, known to the West as Swatow, is modernity. The typhoon and tidal wave of the summer of 1922 that left the low flat land behind it dotted with corpses, the sea for half a day of steaming covered with them, no doubt is a reason for this. But it is not an old town, a mere fishing-village when the British recognized the possibilities of its great hinterland and got it opened to foreign trade. In the main the scars of the great disaster, as of the wide streets that even more recently had been gashed ruthlessly through the older part of town, had healed. The German consulate, like lesser properties here and there, was still a wreck; a large motor-boat still leaned awry in the main street; perhaps the chief reminders were the many graves. The Chinese for once bestirred themselves, when thousands perished within an hour, and got the dead quickly out of the way, for it was August, and Swatow, like Canton, is just within the Tropic of Cancer. Not far in the outskirts are long military rows of tombstones, unusual for China, so closely packed together that one would hardly think full-sized corpses could be squeezed in between them.

Thus Swatow, though also on a rock-bound coast, is quite different from Amoy, with wider, cleaner streets—perhaps the tidal wave washed out the accumulated filth of past generations—a plethora of rickshaws, of the hard-tired, bone-shaking type of southern China, rarely a bound foot or a male cue, few indeed of the narrow stinking lanes common along the coast, though the typhoon left whole streets so shaky that braces across them are necessary to keep walls from falling upon one another. The place has a busier, more prosperous air than most Chinese cities, even if it has also women quarreling over peanuts dropped along the docks and beggars in the last stages of disease and starvation. Unfinished buildings still comparatively new when they were chopped down the middle in widening the streets still lay like the corpses of unsuccessful operations; for failure to compensate the dispossessed had left some men totally ruined. Most of them had been rebuilt better than ever, many with richly decorated façades bearing the words

"High Class Gambling House," a frankness I saw nowhere else in China except in Portuguese Macao, though this is by no means the only place where such establishments are wide open under the protection, even the assistance, of local dictators. Chen Chiung-ming, at the moment holding this eastern end of Kwangtung Province in opposition to his former chief, Sun Yat-sen, at Canton, had built or otherwise acquired many of the new buildings along these streets, and he had threatened to chop his way similarly through foreign property. Thus far the consuls had bluffed him off, but the general fistlessness of foreign governments toward Chinese crimes against their nationals is gradually giving once circumspect local tyrants a feeling of immunity.

The foreign settlement of Swatow across the wide harbor lies amid granite hills, a pleasant place, with trees and grass, flowering cactus and twittering birds, but above all rocks. Several half-obliterated old tombstones in its cemetery tell of Americans and British dying here at least as early as 1866, mainly seafaring people in those days, according to such words as "fell from aloft," among the sometimes sentimental epitaphs. Wealthy Chinese live there of course among the Western officials and heads of firms; a little higher up American Baptists are extending an establishment already materially outdoing the educational plants of many an American city as large as Swatow that gives freely to the "heathen." Its splendid modern granite buildings rival the heaps of boulders among which they are pitched; in years to come a fertile little terraced valley among the rocks which many generations of patient Chinese have forced to feed them rice will resound with the noises of an athletic arena and its surrounding amphitheater likewise due to charitable Americans.

As many as eighteen ocean-going steamers under foreign flags come to Swatow daily, which naturally adds to its air of busyness and prosperity. Whole ship-loads of rich-brown bean-curd cakes, the residue of the soya-bean of Manchuria from which an oil necessary to every Chinese meal is pressed, come down from the north to fertilize the rice-fields. Of the size, look, hardness, and weight of a grindstone, two of them make a good coolie-load, and files of carriers are forever passing with them, snatching on each trip a tally-stick from a clerk seated before an open box of them. Protesting pigs give their share of work to those who live by the strength of their shoulders, and of less persistent imports and exports there is no end. This is no doubt the reason coolies and boatmen of Swatow get better wages and demand higher fees, for if the typhoon made it a cleaner and a newer town,

people who live there assure us that we would not have noticed any signs of a decreased population two days after the catastrophe. Overcrowded China resembles air in its haste to fill a vacuum.

It is not Swatow itself that is important so much as the great back-country of eastern Kwangtung of which this is merely the door known to the outside world. The real city for which this is the treaty-port is Chaochowfu, twenty-five miles inland at the end of a timid bit of railroad with the leisurely patience of most things Chinese. Getting an early train in China—and where are they not early?—is always more or less unreasonably annoying. The “boy” is almost sure to turn his clock ahead to be on the safe side and call you at least an hour earlier than you told him to; the rickshaw-man makes twice the speed out to the station that he would if you had barely time to catch the train; in that case the poled ferry that set us twice its length across the last canal in the outskirts would have been on the other side instead of ready to push off the instant I stepped on board, with the result that you are almost sure to arrive with an hour to spare, to find no signs of engine or train and to feel lucky to find the station and tracks. Probably the engineer has not yet been called, and there is no sign of life in the ticket-office, though mainly coolie crowds are already gathering; your Chinese ticket-seller would be unhappy if he had to exercise his calling without a howling, struggling mob about his window. For one thing he can make the bubbub an excuse for the squeeze he rarely fails to get off every ticket sold. He cannot make change; he must ring and often ring again every coin offered him; the once lonely train is packed to overflowing before you are actually prepared to board it, and it will be queer if another hour has not dragged itself into the past before the row of aged cars finally screeches itself under way.

Swatow soon breaks up into open country, with a suggestion of an American boom town in the outskirts, though real-estate signs are lacking. Here is a coolie push-car along a miniature railroad, such as you see in Formosa; for a short distance there is a wide raised mud road which the same man who chopped the two diagonal streets through the heart of town hoped to make the beginning of automobile traffic, but the military absorbed all the money before it had reached any place worth reaching. Some of the many large towns along the railway of eastern Kwangtung look new, a rare thing in China, which may also be due to the typhoon and the tidal wave, for it is easy to imagine how far inland across this very flat district little above the sea the sudden death swept. Since then there have been one serious and many small

earthquakes in Swatow district, and there is always danger of major tragedies, but the people still crowd back into it. The train crosses many roads unusually up-to-date for southern China, narrow, but so smooth that they resemble meandering cement sidewalks following the old paddy-dikes from the railroad stations to the towns. At this season the wide plain was all mud and water; everywhere plowmen were wading thigh-deep behind water-buffaloes wallowing through the endless slough with infinite slowness. Scores of water-sluices dotted the landscape, all run by treadmill methods and raising water from every possible source into insatiable rice-fields. Irrigating is fine exercise; no wonder you see such splendid calves and thighs in the rural districts of southern China. Here even the women of the working class had shapely legs; often whole families trotted or jogged up and down without progress on the six-inch pole treads of a single irrigating-machine so fast that you wondered how the smaller children could possibly keep up. They dipped up water at short intervals along every creek or stream; there were often several of these trough-and-endless-paddle-chain sluiceways around each mud-hole, into which as it was pumped out men and boys plunged to contend for the fish splashing about in the muddy bottom.

The wind was so strong that waves as at sea passed over the green paddy-fields stretching endlessly in every direction. Flocks of geese seemed to take the place of ducks elsewhere. Graves taking up much valuable rice-land had still another form here, like doughnuts with a raised center, almost the only thing above the flooded fields. Then came small trees in long rows, groves of the famous Swatow oranges, loose-skinned and sweet, but these soon came to an end, as if the soil proper for them was of very limited extent. In their place soon appeared poppies, patches not very large but very carefully, almost affectionately, tended, gay with the white, red, pink, and other blossoms. Never before had I seen them so publicly grown in China.

Chaochowfu, once capital of the province now headed by Canton, with remnants still of its old examination halls, was a typical Chinese city again, mitigated by little of the newness or the foreign influence of Swatow. Carved stone arches, common farther north but seldom seen in those parts of the country given over to street-improving dictators, straddled narrow, wet, stoned passageways so dense with streams of humanity that one could see only the heads and bobbing burdens on the surface and not the sloppy pavements underneath. Some of the women hobbled about on feet that had been unbound; even those who



continued the custom had an advantage over their full-footed sisters of the country districts, for they could wander the shaded streets while the others jogged on their treadmills under a broiling sun. Chaochowfu seemed to be something of a "flapper" town; almost all the women, in black trousers topped by sky-blue blouse, wore flowers and red ornaments in their sleek-oiled hair and powdered their faces even on non-gala occasions like Chinese actors; a few girls bobbed or shingled their hair, and some went so far as to wear skirts, though this last was probably purely missionary influence. While most of the men had sacrificed their pigtails, many still kept their back hair in a bunch six inches to a foot long and sometimes flying loose in the wind.

Whole streets of the former Kwangtung capital resounded with the dull incessant pounding of heavy sledges on bars of tin ore, for here the making of false silver and gold ingots is almost as important an industry as in Shaohsing. From dawn to dusk they are almost never silent, and lifting a dirty curtain or peering through crude bars of sometimes unbarked saplings one saw rows of men in the indispensable portion of trousers sitting in rows and ceaselessly wielding six-pound hammers on stacks of tin-like packs of playing cards, toiling for days to reduce them to tin-foil fit to make false money for the dead. The Government had the bright and not unjustifiable idea of putting a luxury or superstition tax on this important product of Chaochowfu and not a few other towns in the South, but the military quickly plagiarized the idea and had made this one of their chief sources of revenue.

The schemes for winning one's rice are necessarily innumerable in a country with more hungry mouths than jobs. I saw in Chaochowfu one that I had run across before only in the books of early travelers in China and even then took with a grain of salt, or concluded that at least it had disappeared from modern means of livelihood. But I was often reminded on that brilliant Sunday that Chaochowfu is not modern China. Two young men looking quite well and sturdy enough to have endured more productive occupations were going slowly along the streets, each carrying a heavy meat-ax. In the doorway of every shop they halted to wail monotonous, half-musical appeals for alms, which they emphasized by chopping themselves fore and aft across the tops of their heads, so that blood was smeared over their faces and streaked their bodies, naked to the waist. Nor was their chopping mere pretense; I watched them long enough to make sure of that, and not only were there a score of open gashes across their scalps

but innumerable lines proving previous self-torture. Such sights as these were a part of the day's work with the American missionary girls stationed in this old-fashioned city. Only a few days before one of them had passed a man who had been shot by order of the authorities, but he turned over as if to look at her, whereupon an armed ragamuffin ran up and shot him again. Nearly every one except the poorest coolies seemed to be armed. Most of the wealth of present-day China must be in firearms and ammunition, from very old to the latest style weapons. The local dictator had just then nine wives, none of them with bound feet, and the whole nine sometimes went on picnics with ladies of the local mission station.

The sight of Chaochowfu is its ancient bridge. Made of many stone arches, it was picturesque with unbroken rows of shops hanging out over its sides and with the endless swarms of humanity that seethed back and forth between them. The middle portion had never been built, perhaps because the craft constantly passing up and down the river could not have gone under it, but was made up of a long line of boats that swung aside whenever passage was demanded. A life-size water-buffalo in bronze at the top of the long, narrow, slimy steps going down to the boats is the protecting genius of the half-pontoon bridge, and to this the pious burn much joss. Great slabs of stone sometimes twenty-five feet long formed the roadway from arch to arch. I had a hint of how they were moved, perhaps of how the pyramids were built, when I met a similar mighty slab of granite borne by twenty-five coolies, two at the ends of twelve whole-bamboo carrying-poles and one directing operations, crawling their way through the narrow, meandrous streets, sometimes going a mile out of their course before they found a corner wide enough to change their direction.

On the river at Chaochowfu were many Hakka boats, larger than most river craft of southern China, with a high flaring bow and swallow-tail sterns, the sails of unique shape, like two immense triangles fastened together in the center, giving them a striking appearance as they sailed away up the river under their vast spread of canvas. These queer Hakka boats, seen even in Swatow and Amoy, are the queerer because no woman is allowed on board them, lest she bring bad luck. The hinterland of Swatow and Chaochowfu is primarily the land of the Hakkas. They are a mountain, or at least a foot-hill, people, and all the ranges back of this coast are full of them.

It is a popular belief, reaching even to our Western encyclopedias,

that the Hakkas are aboriginals, "barbarians," one of the many tribes conquered by the Chinese. But they and the American and British missionaries working among them are bent on proving that they are real Chinese, who came down centuries ago and drove out the real "barbarians" and aborigines, such as the Miao and the Yao. The traditional antipathy of the Cantonese for them, they say, is the main reason for the wide-spread impression that they are *man-tze*, or at best a mongrel race somewhat more civilized than the indigenous inhabitants, but hardly entitled to rank as Chinese. In every Hakka community, say those who are studying the question, there is a historical record, with the names of the successive ancestors, showing their migrations. Many of these books of ancestry state clearly that most of the Hakkas came from Honan, some from Shantung. There appear to have been two periods of migration, one early in the fourth century and one late in the ninth. About 317 A.D. the Huns captured and misused the emperors of the Tsin dynasty, and these insults and humiliations seem to have broken the spirit of the people, so that when the founder of the eastern Tsin dynasty made Nanking his capital many took their families across the "Great River" (Yang Tze), a step comparable among so home-loving a people with the crossing of the Atlantic by the Pilgrim Fathers. Soon after the establishment of the eastern Tsin dynasty there was a period of chaos lasting 130 years, caused chiefly by the foreign militarists who gained the favor of a Chinese emperor and when they saw themselves strong enough turned their weapons against him. Hence the Chinese—then only of the North, the Cathay of Marco Polo, which was China proper—were naturally inclined to look for a place where they could hope to be free both from chaos and the foreign yoke. When Kau Tsun of the Sung dynasty was driven south in 1127 by the Mongols, flock after flock of the Chinese who had hitherto regarded the Great River as an ample barrier against the invaders fled with the emperor. They seem again to have struck a course due south and to have settled this time in southwestern Fukien. At first they expected to move just far enough to keep themselves out of the war zone, perhaps to return after the troubles were over. But as new generations came on and foreign invaders pushed farther and farther south, "these real Chinese, being lovers of liberty and sensible to the shame of the foreign yoke," moved more and more southward. The final migration began and ended in the fourteenth century.

At the beginning of their migrations the natives of southern China were *man-tze*, or southern barbarians, and when a civilized community

from China proper resettled among people more or less different they were called, or called themselves, Hakkas, that is, "guest people," in mandarin *Ku-chiah*. The earliest new-comers seem to have been absorbed by the people among whom they settled, but large compact communities appear to have kept themselves intact all the way to the hills above the southern coast. They seem to have got so far into the hills that, being off the usual routes of travel, the Mongol armies either failed to find them or did not think it worth while to conquer them. There are now estimated to be 15,000,000 people in China who speak the Hakka dialect. They form a majority of the population in northern Kwangtung, and in general inhabit the mountainous portions of Kiangsi, Fukien, and Kwangsi, as if they had strewn themselves along the route of their various migrations. Nine out of ten Hakkas of eastern Kwangtung say that their ancestors came from the district of Ninghwa in Fukien, where they seem to have stayed for about four centuries. The farther north one goes in Kwangtung the more Hakkas one finds, which indicates that the Hakkas are not tribes from overseas, nor from Sinkiang, as some have contended. Among the arguments that they are real Chinese from Honan is the similarity of marriage and burial customs. Their colloquial tongue is said to be the old speech of Honan; Hakkas who have visited that province report that the language of a certain district there is almost identical with their own; scholars have found much resemblance between modern Hakka and the ancient Chinese as recovered from the poems and rimes of antiquity; their tongue is typically northern, retaining many correct tones of the ancient Chinese, and of all the dialects spoken by the Chinese in southern China the Hakka is most similar to mandarin.

The race consciousness is now strongest in Kaying, north of Swatow, whole districts of its prefecture being peopled by Hakkas, who seem to have come there five or six centuries ago. Physically they do not differ noticeably from the Cantonese, though foreigners working among them say they can be recognized by their physiognomy before they open their mouths. Like mountain-dwellers the world over, they are more fearless and self-reliant, have more love of liberty, than town-dwellers. They are so industrious that once they get a foothold they gradually crowd out all others. The railroad from Swatow to Chaochowfu was built by Hakka contractors and is now owned and largely manned by Hakkas. They take to politics as naturally as the Irish. Centuries of hard grubbing in their mountain lands have not left them lazy, though it seems to be mainly the women

who do the hard work. They do not bind their feet—which would seem an argument against their Chinese origin, unless that miserable custom grew up after their migrations. The women are strong and erect, though excessive toil begun too early in life may account in part for their tendency to be undersized. There are Hakkas in every social stratum, from coolies to men of business and learning. Kaying is called the Athens of Hakkadom, for there almost all the men are literate, while the women do all the carrying and other heavy work. “The men do not even know how to carry water”—and probably do not demand that the women give them lessons at it. A still more remarkable characteristic claimed for them is that even the coolies take a hot bath every night of their lives, though their houses are as porcine as those of the ordinary Chinese, and where they are in a minority, as in Swatow and other ports, they lose this excellent habit. A Hakka community is said to be the best educated in the province—naturally, if the women will do all the work—and the district of Kaying alone claims six hundred schools for boys and girls, which is probably above the proportion anywhere else in China except perhaps in a few large cities.

Few Hakkas marry ordinary Chinese. They bury their dead for a while, then dig them up with great ceremony and put the “golden bones” in a “golden jar” to bury them again. Missionaries among them assert that there are almost no robberies in Hakkadom, that beggary is considered extremely shameful, and that there are no Hakka prostitutes. On the other hand they eat snakes, rats, dogs, and cats. Dogs are brought to market in long strings, with bamboo-rope leashes. A watchman at an American mission school told the head of the institution that he liked his job particularly because the students were so good to him; they had already given him six rats! He had one peeled and ready for the pot as he spoke. The supposedly Christian servant of another missionary ate the family cat when they decided to get rid of it. A Hakka woman asked a missionary family for one of a new litter of puppies, and thinking she wished to make a pet of it they complied—and found its hair behind the kitchen that same afternoon. The Americans working among the Hakkas still now and then see babies floating down the rivers, but in Kaying at least infanticide is now rare.

Their tendency to migrate does not seem to have died out, for of late the Hakkas have gone abroad in great numbers. Next to the Cantonese they are the most widely scattered people of China, there not only being many of an earlier strain in Formosa and in Hainan,

but thousands in the Dutch East Indies, Borneo, the Straits Settlements, the Malay Peninsula, Siam, Burma, and even Mauritius, where no doubt they have no difficulty in passing for Chinese. Many Hakkas returned from foreign countries contributed much in money and knowledge to the victories of the revolution. It was among the Kwang-si Hakkas that the Hakka leader of the Taiping rebellion got his first fighting adherents, and they had long been known for their enmity to Manchu rule. Whether or not they are really Chinese in origin, they form a very distinct and virile strain in the Chinese race of to-day, and they will probably play an increasingly important part in whatever progress and improvement China may divulge in the future.

Hong Kong loomed up through the mists of a late December morning during my second year in China; I was due to pass through it half a dozen times before I left the Orient. Like Shanghai, it had changed much since I first saw it, almost twenty years before. The same funicular cable-cars, however, still carry one to the Peak—so do automobiles also now—to look down upon a scene in a milder way almost as striking as Rio. From the compact narrow city below like the embroidery on the bottom of a skirt the eyes wander away across the deep-blue harbor scattered with scores of ships riding at anchor because the wharves on both sides of the bay are already crowded from end to end with others, merging into islands in the offing that seem likewise anchored in the blue sea, a harbor streaked by constantly arriving and departing steamers from everywhere and by the ferries to the various parts of the mainland suburb of Kowloon, beyond which one may even see hills that are still Chinese.

Hong Kong is not after all in China, though it is not strange that so many people mistake it for a Chinese city. Having taken the island and started the city of Victoria nearly a century ago as a result of the first "opium war," the British were not satisfied until the Chinese gave them a goodly slice of the mainland also; and now they are not satisfied with the way the Lord made what the Chinese gave them, so that slowly the hills of the mainland, as of Hong Kong itself, are being chopped and blasted away to fill in the hollows and give place to expanding Kowloon and its many suburbs, cluttered with elaborate bamboo scaffolds. These disappearing hills are carried off almost entirely by hand, with long stairways, like the notched stick up which the jungle savage climbs to his dwelling, cut in the steep slopes to give foothold for the Chinese coolies, female as often as male, who do the work.

Women with a curious combination of hat and sunshade, of grindstone size and shape with a fringe of black cloth hanging well down about its edge and worn even during midwinter months, carry baskets of stone or earth, or sit breaking rock with a baby or more playing beside them.

Two-storied street-cars, like those of Chile—though here classes are reversed and the haughty white man deigns to ride aloft—move from end to end of the narrow island town, through Happy Valley, promoted now from cemetery to race-track, Kennedy Town, and other sections of British nomenclature; and farther still motor-cars will carry those who can afford them up and over or clear around the steep little island. Motoring is cheaper across the bay, where motor-buses race in constant streams from the ferry-landing to every suburb, and there rickshaws have unlimited scope compared with the little level space in down-town Victoria, behind which the "Do Be Chairful Company"—English wit sieved through Chinese brains comes out in strange forms of facetiousness—provide many clean and comfortable conveyances that are not exactly chairs, though you may sit in them and be carried.

Hong Kong is so free a port that in all the six times I passed through it, two or three times as a family of five with a dozen unassorted pieces of baggage, I was never once spoken to officially, on the question of either passport or baggage. That is what we travelers would have the wide world round, and Hong Kong seems to benefit rather than suffer by it. Looking back upon it I wonder if this Elysian freedom is what I took it to be or merely a sign that no one in official Hong Kong is lowly enough to speak to strangers. Snobbery and the rules of caste taken from one of their chief habitats and marooned on this much tinier island, there to interbreed for generations, not unnaturally have reached heights that emphasize the pettiness of mankind. I never had the experience of a man of my acquaintance who, pausing to ask his way of a passing member of the upper crust in Hong Kong, was violently berated for speaking to him without ever having been introduced, but I have had hints to convince me that this is not so impossible as it sounds. That something which even the best of mankind cannot escape when living long among those they consider their inferiors flowers most luxuriantly in small and isolated communities. The character of many a white man in China explains why the effect of slavery was as bad on the slave-owner as on the slave. Our own countrymen in the Orient are not free from undemocratic ways; the English in China's large ports are often insufferable even to their fellow-nationals from Canada or Australia. The sleek young fellows

who drift down from their residences on the Peak toward ten, half an hour or more later than the signs in their offices announce them, are not seriously to blame for the results of their narrow environment perhaps; but there seems no good reason why older and more traveled men of the same race stationed along the coast of China proper and up the Yang Tze should be still less noted for their civility than their nation as a whole. The unIntroduced client is generally greeted with an icy "What can I do for you?" and it is almost the British-Chinese custom to let even a lady stand during the ensuing interview, while the steamship-agent or what not sits tight in the chair from which he did not so much as budge when she entered.

Even in this tight little British colony Europeans are swamped by the Chinese and their customs. The three-story houses of stucco or cement with heavy overhanging balconies are hung with a vast array of Chinese garments; from the swaying top of a street-car one can look into more Chinese households than into Irish and Italian from the Elevated in New York. In the original Hong Kong taxicabs and automobiles pass looking as important as if they carried a king's viceroy, with nothing inside but a few cheap European-aping Chinese youths, or those racial misfits without a country ("Where is Eurasia?" asked a sweet young thing just arrived in the East). The plaint is often heard that the Hong Kong Government is really in the hands of the Chinese. The seamen's strike of a few years ago, when the Government that took down their union sign was forced to put it up again with its own fair hands, was particularly a blow to foreign prestige, not merely in Hong Kong but in every treaty-port, for you cannot do such things and keep your standing among the Chinese, whatever sentimentalists and missionaries may say. Now the officers of ships registered in Hong Kong have to take almost as many orders from their crews as they give.

Compared with China proper Hong Kong gives an impression of wealth. Rich Chinese come and settle in safety here, even have themselves born here, getting their share of the rich juice of the transhipping trade, erecting modern department-stores that cut deeply into the British merchant's semi-monopoly, becoming such good Britishers that the king now and then "Sirs" one of them. For all this and its modernity, perhaps on account of it, there is the same old poverty as elsewhere; crowds struggling for a bare existence, coolies and beggars in naked legs—though even at Christmas one does not exactly suffer from bare feet in Hong Kong—are almost as conspicuous as anywhere in



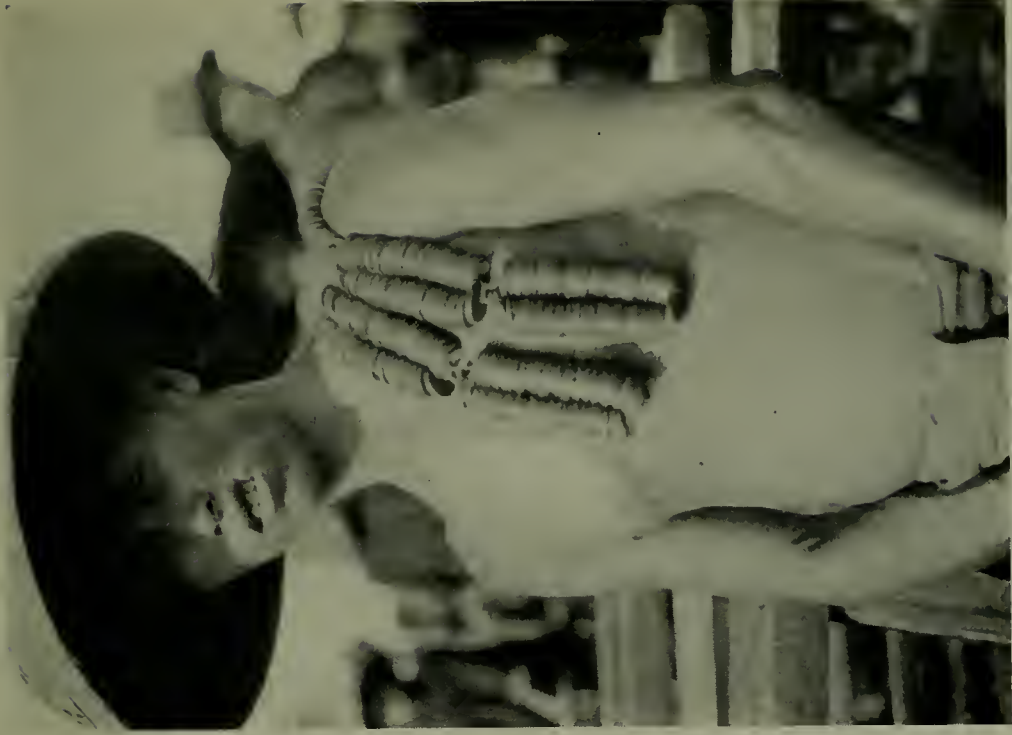
China proper. Women break stone and carry cruel loads; when the steamers from Canton and Macao and who knows how many other neighboring places have come in and tied up toward midnight, coolies wrap themselves in their dirty straw mats or rags and lie down to sleep on the bare wharves.

Even if one is in no mood to gamble or take part in some of the other iniquities on which it lives, the traveler in China should not of course fail to visit Macao, the oldest and long the most important European treaty-port and foreign concession in China. Four hours on a comfortable steamer, morning or afternoon, carries him across the bay to it from Hong Kong; drinking, gambling, and vice-living places are always well supplied with good and frequent transportation. It almost takes one's breath to realize that the Portuguese got Macao away back in the Ming dynasty, just half a century before the Manchus with whom all other nations of the West had their troubles had come out of their shell up in the bleak northwest territory. It was more than three hundred years later that those upstart powers, England and the United States, came in. When the British "factories" were chased out of Canton they asked to share Macao with the Portuguese, but the haughty Lusitanians refused to have any dealings with the island of shopkeepers, and so the British started a rival trading-port on the then almost uninhabited island which the Chinese still call Hsiang Gang, "sweet waters," which to the rude ears of the sailors of those days sounded like "Hong Kong," and now Macao is a village by comparison. There are signs in its cemetery that it was once a business place of several races, but it has long since sunk to the unimportance of a gambling-den, the chief Monte Carlo of the Chinese coast and the greatest, because the most visible and tangible, of the several bad examples set by the West to the Far East.

Physically it is attractive. Built on a rocky tongue of land along a bare and rocky coast, which ships go clear around, so that they skirt the wharfless Praya Grande first, it is just such a mixture of Portuguese and Chinese, with hints of other influences, as you would expect such a colony four centuries on the China coast to be. The cobbled streets on which the hard-rubber-tired rickshaws bounce are not very different from those of China proper, for neither are those of Cintra and back-street Lisbon. On the seaside of the town there is a pleasant promenade under shade-trees held up by a sea-wall upon which typhoons now and then wreak their vengeance. Frequently

a Chinese funeral, with certain modifications showing Portuguese influence, makes procession along this Praya Grande; in the cool of the evening important citizens and their legal or self-chosen spouses ride up and down it. Two-story arcades run entirely around the waterfront; old medieval European houses in pink, red, blue, and other vivid colors stretch along hard European streets; old forts, ancient churches, the oldest lighthouse on the China coast, queer junks with khaki sails silhouetted against the sunset, a terrific smell of dried fish, are among the main features of the picture. Shark's fins and all manner of *peixe salgado*, split and filled with salt by the men who catch them and forthwith sewed up by their women, hang and lie before scores of shops. It is a hilly town, so that there are many fine seascapes for the climbing; Camões' Gardens with its small royal palms to emphasize Macao's relationship to Brazil, filled with huge tumbled boulders from among which spring these and other trees, the grotto where the great poet was wont to sit, faced now by a stone singing his praises in Portuguese and English, draw the visitor to one end of town, while near the other is a Chinese temple piled up a bouldered hillside, an ancient caravel carved on a great stone in its lower compound, for the gods here are reputed to give special ear to the prayers of mariners and those about to go to sea. Then there is the gateway between Macao and Chinese territory, under the constant vigilance of jet-black Portuguese soldiers, outside which in a temple a few *li* across the plain, toward the hills that loom in the distance beyond, Caleb Cushing and a son of Daniel Webster signed the first treaty between China and the United States. Of all these things perhaps the one most symbolical of Macao is the empty façade of an ancient church, left from the early days of pious Portugal, that stands out on a hilltop like a skeleton of the past.

There is naturally a great mixture of races in Macao. Pretty white women with brown babies peer forth from gaily colored houses or come out for a ride when the sun is low; the five races of mankind may now and then be seen in a single countenance. Three hundred white Portuguese troops form the nucleus of the garrison; the rest are Mozambique negroes from another Portuguese colony, than which there is nothing blacker in nature so far as I have seen it, big boyish fellows with a childish laugh and flashing teeth, dressed in khaki that contrasts better with black than with white faces, their bare feet and legs below the knees as fine leggings as you could devise. Timorista soldiers from the Portuguese half of the island of Timor, much like the Dyaks of Borneo, once did duty here, but they could not stand the climate.



In many parts of China coolies, still receive their wages in strings of "cash," each string, of which there are two here, weighing about eight pounds and worth an American quarter



While she breaks stone the Hong Kong coolie woman also takes care of her numerous offspring



Looking across Portuguese Macao



On a huge boulder in the compound of a Chinese temple in Macao where mariners and those about to go to sea come to offer rewards for their safety is carved an ancient caravel

Then, too, a place of Macao's habits must have many policemen, and they are of many kinds. Dark-brown Aryans from Goa, Chinese, Hindus and Sikhs, in turbans rather than helmets, mixed breeds of all these and more, including descendants of the Japanese Christians, a species of Oriental Huguenots, who fled here generations ago, patrol the streets in close succession.

To the world at large Macao is synonymous with gambling. Lottery-tickets prominently marked with the name of the "Santa Casa de Misericordia," that they may pretend even to themselves that they are devoted to the *beneficencia publica*, decorate the fronts of shops; by day Macao is languid, but with the coming of night bright lights bring out everywhere the narrow and cobbled, the crowded and noisy streets that are not very different from those of China proper, except that the gambling-houses and other "places of iniquity" are even more numerous than anywhere in China; the clack of wooden sandals, the clash of mah-jongg games, the screeching of singsong girls in brilliantly lighted hotels and brothels—as in Brazil there is no distinct line of demarcation between the two—continue unabated until long after the mere sight-seeing visitor has taken to his bed. In one establishment is the famous gambling-wheel banished from Manila when it changed its nationality. Scores if not hundreds of bright signs make the self-same announcement: "First Class Gambling House"; those not posing as first class occupy the intervening buildings and are little worse or better than their more pretentious rivals. All are three stories high, with coolies crowded about the long, mat-covered tables below, and upstairs, between the busy ground floor and the sleeping and living quarters of the inmates by day, with a railing about an opening in the floor to correspond to the table below, is the place where those of the better class, able to risk at least a Canton dollar at a time, sit on chairs and are cooled perhaps by electric fans. Scrawny indoor types, some of the men in undershirts or stripped to the waist, with finger-nails like cats' claws, many wearing jade or imitation bracelets, a few women of the less respectable class, all Chinese except here and there a queer-looking foreigner, lean from their chairs or stools over the railings. For all their bright lights the establishments are anything but palatial, rather decrepit, after the Chinese and Portuguese fashion, none too clean. Tea, toasted melon-seeds, shelled peanuts, sweets, a bit of fruit are set on the table-topped railing before each new arrival; down-stairs, where even coppers are not scorned, the clients stand and have no refreshments. Pads of paper in ruled squares, the sheets tied

together instead of being bound, pencils fastened with long strings to the railing, invite the gambler to begin his calculations. The table below is some twenty feet long, the money laid on the four sides of squares a foot each way in a dozen places along it by those who are trying their luck, between them trays full of money of the house,—coppers, Canton twenty-cent pieces, silver dollars, bills of five and ten and even higher. While the bets are being placed the croupier at the end of the table sits smoking with the bored but otherwise expressionless face of his kind the world over. A heap of polished brass “cash” lies before him, half covered with a brass disk with a handle; Chinese fan-tan habitués become so expert that they have been known to count correctly a whole heap of such counters before the bets are closed. At length the croupier picks up a thin wand, and with the exact motions of an experienced surgeon pulls the now uncovered “cash” toward him, four at a time, with the extreme end of the rod. The number left at the end of the counting wins. Some croupiers are said to be so clever that they can keep one “cash” hidden under another as they draw them in and thus change the count in favor of the house. Half a dozen men behind the trays, all in the last stages of boredom, pay out money to the winners with the easy speed of experts. Some goes into the little baskets on the ends of strings in which other bored Celestials, the same who served the tea and squash-seeds, let down bets from the floor of the élite above, with a monotonous singsong “*Yat man sam chalk,*” as nearly as my ear caught their Cantonese dialect—“One dollar on No. 3.” Winners seemed to forfeit a copper for each twenty-cent piece won, as a kind of tax to the Government or to the house. All night long year in and year out this goes on in dozens of establishments in every down-town street. It is as stupid a game as could well be imagined, calling for no other mental effort than patience and guessing. Ah, well, life is a gamble anyway. But this is so fatuous a way to lose, or even to get, money.

Graft reigns supreme in Macao, as one would expect in such a place under the Portuguese-Chinese point of view. Every one squeezes, down to the police patrolling the cobbled streets. Gambling, opium, prostitution, are the only reasons for its existence. Portuguese government officials with salaries of a hundred “Mex” dollars a month have big, luxurious houses, a dozen servants, expensive automobiles, mistresses in silks and jewels. It is the only Portuguese colony, they say, that pays dividends. Its officials not long ago arranged with the politicians at home to let them spend six million on a breakwater that

is not needed, there being no trade worth mentioning, and which will probably never be finished; in other words they want the income to stay in Macao, or go into their own pockets, instead of being spent in the Metropole or in the other colonies. Macao officials more or less secretly encourage the Chinese pirates who infest this coast to come here and spend their winnings in gambling, smoking opium, entertaining the ladies, and probably outfitting for new expeditions. A missionary whose work among lepers of the coast makes it impossible for him to denounce them meets dozens of pirates in its streets, usually dressed like middle-class merchants; many a big hotel blazes and roars with the festivities by which the sea-rovers make up for the perils and hardships of their calling.

## CHAPTER IX

### A SHORT WINTER IN THE "SOUTHERN CAPITAL"

**I** CAME to Canton from all four points of the compass during my last year in China. The first time was by the comfortable and familiar way of tourists and business men,—steamer from Hong Kong. There are several boats by day and as many by night, the fares double on the somewhat more palatial, with the added privilege of being under the protection, whatever it may amount to in present-day China, of the British flag. By day one slips across the blue bay of Hong Kong, dotted with islands in the offing, and into what turns out to be a river, though at first it looks like more bay, tawny hills gashed and split by torrential rains gradually infolding it, long arms of sea-blue water reaching far into the valleys. Soon the hills are lower, and presently they are gone. The delta country widens to a fertile plain, one of the richest in the world, that spreads out for mile after mile on either hand. Long ditches intersect broad stretches of olive-green rice, willows lean along the watercourses, bamboos and banana-plants fringe the mud-walled villages that are rarely out of sight of one another, so intensely is this district cultivated. The river is not always easy navigating, one gathers from the sight of a big steamer, under a British captain of decades of experience on this run, breaking in two where it was driven ashore in a narrow part of it. Whangpoa and the two pagodas on Honam Island at length appear in succession, a clump of hills known as White Cloud Mountain rises off the starboard bow, and before the sun is far on its decline an almost Occidental sky-line grows up along the banks of the now crowded river and one has reached Canton, its modernized face masking the ancient city behind.

Perhaps the more popular way is to leave Hong Kong toward the end of the theater-hour and, after watching the play of the moonlight across the sea and its islands and the coast that eventually shuts it in, to be awakened by a mighty hubbub and find the steamer warping its way into one of several wharves flanking a Bund already in an uproar of chaotic noises even at this unearthly hour. Quite as crowded



is the Chu-kiang, the Pearl River, as the Cantonese miscall their main stream, boats of every size and description dotting it as far as the eye can see, whole streets of house-boats in the real sense of the word running out at right angles from the overpopulated shore, craft so thick that every time a steamer docks several floating houses all but get crushed, or their families all but cut in two by hawsers; yet though there is much shrieking and futile paddling, they never seem to come completely to grief, or keep out of the way the next time.

"Next to the exuberance of the population," as some traveler of long ago well put it, "the number of boats employed on the rivers of southern China is the most striking circumstance belonging to the Chinese Empire." Many thousands of the citizens of Canton are born and die on boats, are married on them and buried from them; they form almost a race apart, more aggressive, more independent, than those who have to cringe for life ashore. It might be a way to overcome our own "housing crisis" to have a few millions of our people take to living on the water. The family altar occupies the center and best part of almost every boat, and this part is often surprisingly clean, if the water of the Chu-kiang can really cleanse anything. The same question as to how the boat-dwellers earn a living confronts the beholder here and in Foochow and elsewhere. The men, and boys old enough to compete in the chaotic Cantonese struggle for existence, are often away pulling rickshaws or doing other work ashore, so that it is usually the women, the younger children helping, who stand at the stern twisting back and forth the big oar tied to the deck with a rope of native fibers with which they scull passengers or cargo in their floating homes along the river or through the channels, too narrow for rowing. If the man is at home he commonly sits at the prow, giving orders, now and then using a bamboo pole, and collecting any money due. Thus the women of the vast water-dwelling population of Canton are quite as expert with the oar as are their offspring at sleeping on their backs while they scull. A duck does not swim more casually than they handle their boats.

Up some of the dirty creeks that divide the city there are toll-bridges of an old plank laid from boat to boat, or an aged craft itself serving as bridge, the women and children of the family clearing the way whenever a boat comes up or down the stream, and expecting a few "cash" for all who walk across it. There are whole streets of "slipper-boats," of cargo-craft ever ready for any job that offers, and filled with all the intimate sights of a household, all manner of queer

junks of every size, that wander away up country now and then and some day wander back again, all kinds of strange imitations of gun-boats flying the flag—by design or some amusing coincidence bearing a flaming sun—of the Government of Sun Yat-sen. Junks with high and curiously painted poops, some carrying cannon of two centuries ago against the pirates, are anchored out in the river, or arrive or depart so deeply loaded that one wonders they can float. Municipal ferries in the shape of miserable rowboats ply back and forth across the river to an equally crowded section of the city on Honam Island at a few “cash” a passenger—if he happens to have them; big stern-wheelers run by no other engine than a dozen or score of coolies marching a treadmill inside jostle coasting-vessels and foreign steamers flying many flags, from British to Portuguese, with their Sikh guards and futile guard-cages. Whole streets of “flower-boats,” in which ladies of the most ancient of female professions entertain, mainly by night, the male population of Canton, stretch their gaudy way along the river, particularly before that section of town that became our home. In the morning, not too early, you will find the girls combing and prinking, repainting their sadly impaired façades, while slatternly old mother busies herself with the housework, re-decorates the family altar, and refreshes the place for the night’s customers. Like the coolies these women of the “flower-boats” face life with a cheerful demeanor, as if, true fatalists, they are not going to be any more miserable than necessary over the lot to which the gods have assigned them.

Perhaps it is because it turns to the river its most Westernized front that Canton gives the impression at once of being engaged in an enormous amount of building, more modern building than any other Chinese city, outside the foreign concessions. For a mile or more along the river-front boulevard stretches a long row of five- and six-story structures, culminating in the great Sun department-store—not, as many tourists conclude, and buy souvenirs for the folks at home accordingly, owned, but merely mulcted, by Sun Yat-sen—rising above all else to a tower so high that it not only charges but actually collects a fee from those who wish to go up and look out over Canton and its vicinity. Shrieks, shouts, and chaos are constant in this river of screaming pullers of rattling, buggy-wheeled rickshaws, carriers of heavy pole-borne burdens, peddlers, beggars, boatmen—more often women, quite as sturdy and capable in the struggle for existence—clamoring for passengers, ungreased autobuses constantly snorting to

and from Tung Shan, dreadful things with atrocious wooden seats in no way suited to a foreigner's sitting posture, jolting and jumping beneath their inexpert chauffeurs, causing few deaths only by miracle. Official automobiles with one weak-faced man of importance lolling inside and four, six, even eight soldiers in khaki on the running-boards, cocked rifle-handled automatics in hand, dash up to the Asia Hotel, follow close about the simple youth in flannel as he makes his way to the elevator, and descend with him to climb again all over the car as it leaves. Canton is particularly given to this parading with cocked automatics in hand. Swarms of pedestrians pour in and out of the narrow side streets and along the Bund itself, with a mingling of uniformed employees of the big stone custom-house and the post-office, perhaps even an eccentric foreigner willing to walk the hundred yards from the concession to the steamer wharves, haughty with his efforts to appear effortless in all this maelstrom, all the rank and file and chaos of Chinese life stretching as far as the eye can see and farther than the ears can hear or the nose protest down the wide street between the more or less foreign face of the city and the river with its even more crowded streets of boats.

The only semi-calm in all the scene is a small island close off the Bund, known as Dutch Folly, because it was once offered to Holland as a concession by the Chinese, who thought it worth nothing, an erroneous impression in which the slow-thinking Dutchmen agreed with them. Wu Ting-fang once had his home and office in the rambling house now overrun by soldiers, like every other available space in town, that covers all the western end of the island, overhanging the river and shaded by two big banyan-trees; and at the farther end a Chinese admiral in bronze and full Western regalia stands gazing off down the river. The original, it seems, was assassinated here at a feast to which a rival had invited him, and with one of those delicate touches peculiar to the Celestial character the assassin provided the statue in memory of his victim. Since they are otherwise so rarely called to account, it would seem only just that our own assassins, if some means could be found to raise them to the Chinese standard, should have the courtesy to make some such reparation. Though the harbor-master advised against it, the island was soon to be connected with the mainland, so that some of the money which the Southern party seems to need even more constantly than the other dictators of China could be raised by selling it.

Down the river where those take sampans who miss the launch

to the Canton Christian College on its few self-conveniencing trips, the Bund peters out in blocks of four-story buildings once devoted to ladies of the allegedly easy life, but now the noisome and disheveled unpaid dwellings of mercenary soldiers and other discordant elements. Time was when you could descend at the station, over the bridge beyond, just four hours after boarding an express at Kowloon, the Hong Kong mainland; but though tourist bureaus still hopefully advertise the advantages of this route, years have passed since the civil wars in Kwangtung Province closed it to through traffic.

The newly arrived foreigner is more likely to go the other way along the swarming Bund, toward a glimpse of trees, and find himself wondering a few yards beyond the steamer wharves what all the semi-forest and grassy lawns and general un-Chinese order and cleanliness before him mean. Then he realizes, as he crosses a brief gated bridge guarded at the Bund end by an Oriental in French uniform, who lets him enter with almost a welcoming smirk, though he scrutinizes all the slender stream of his fellow-Easterners who pass the gate, that he is on Shameen. Though the Portuguese were the first Europeans, Marco Polo and no doubt a few less articulate of his kind excepted, to come into contact with the Chinese, Canton became a treaty-port, which was soon to wipe out Macao's more than three centuries of advantage, long before Amoy, Foochow, Ningpo, and Shanghai followed suit or Hong Kong raised the British flag. Some decades later the Canton "factories"—for which read trading-posts—of the English and French were robbed and ruined, and several traders killed, whereupon the two governments informed the Manchu dynasty at Peking that they must have a spot of their own where they could rule and protect their own people. "Very well," replied the Manchus, their tongues in their cheeks as usual in dealing with crude outside barbarians, "you may have Shameen." Sandy Face was a patch of sand a bit up the river from Dutch Folly, below water at high tide, and one of the principal garbage-heaps of the unspeakable Chinese city behind it. To the surprise of the Chinese the mad foreigners accepted the offer, spent what was a lot of money in those days to fill in between the stone embankment with which they encircled it, and proceeded to build a foreign settlement on the resulting forty-four acres, as annual rental for which they pay to this day a few strings of "cash" per *mou*.

Now three broad streets shaded by venerable old trees run the length of the oblong island, with cross streets in proportion, two on



The cash-register of Canton, where silver twenty-cent pieces are the largest money, consists of a board with depressions in it, into which coins are shaken



In Canton, where thieves are legion and heat often intense, sliding doors of stout poles protect most well-to-do households and shops



From the last bridge on the labyrinthine way to our Canton home in the western suburb stretched a Venetian scene that was a little more pleasant at high than at low tide

the river-front and the back canal respectively, the one down the center of the island so wide that tennis-courts stretch between the two sidewalks. Along these leisurely streets suggestive of an unspoiled New England village are the foreign banks, the consulates, the ancient establishment that still boasts itself the only foreign hotel in Canton, nearly all the old foreign business houses, and, mainly in the upper stories of these, many of the foreign residences. Perhaps the first and abiding impression, at least to one fresh from the interior of China, is the prettiness of this miniature foreign city on an island hardly big enough for a race-track. Its spreading trees and bright flower-beds, the lawns that stretch continuously between the dignified rows of houses, its trim cleanliness, its spacious calm for all its small size, so that precious as is every acre it still maintains a large football-field before the landing-stage, make as great a contrast between this handful of foreign soil and the city from which only a narrow creek far-famed for its smells separates it as the contrast between Europe and China. Only two little gated bridges connect it with Canton—with China, one is almost betrayed into putting it—and these close by night; no Chinese boats may moor to the Shameen side of the narrow canal dividing this little alien world from the Orient, though they crowd in serried ranks, like automobiles nose to curb in a prairie town on a Saturday night, along every inch of the Canton side twenty feet away.

It seems ridiculous to associate thoughts of business with so pretty, so toy-like a place, and it is not hard to get those who play at it to quit their ledgers and codes and come out and frankly play. Here is little of the surge and blare of Shanghai; one fancies Western business life was much like this in those far-off days when this bit of sand was turned over to the despised barbarians. Here are no automobiles, not even the rattle of wagons; not so much as a rickshaw can pass the vigilant Cerberus who guards either of the two entrances across the Stinks—though to be sure two or three foreigners seem to have a "special pull" with the municipal council or whatever governing body Shameen boasts; the West itself, to say nothing of the East, would seem strange without its specially privileged—and there is no traffic more terrifying than baby-carriages and a few bicycles, once in a great while a chair for some aged resident whose pedestrian days are over. One fifth of the island belongs to the French and the rest is British, so that the Gallic architecture and atmosphere of the few acres at the eastern entrance change several

times before they terminate in Japanese at the western end, where the pushing little islanders have taken advantage of their British ally. Perhaps, like other Western concessions in China, Shameen has more Chinese than foreign residents; not, however, as householders. In Canton things are the other way about; it is the foreigners who must seek refuge among the Chinese. Shameen is too small even for new-comers of our own race to find housing upon it, so that it resembles those aristocratic sections of our cities where the old families whose forebears guessed well in their land-buying have everything within their grasp. The likeness might be continued, to mention certain village weaknesses of human nature, somewhat different from the city weaknesses of Shanghai, for as a resident put it, "There can't be any gossip or scandal on Shameen, because we all live in one another's pockets and know one another's history from the day we or our ancestors landed in China." No Chinese except house-servants are allowed to live on the island, but every office has its Chinese clerks, and every foreign household, be its head only a lone bachelor, has its cluster of Chinese domestics; thousands of other Celestials find some excuse to enter Shameen, some merely to report the wonders of the foreigners' ways of living to their open-mouthed villages; not a few, though it is against the rules, make the broad cement sidewalks between the two gates a thoroughfare from one part of Canton proper to another, so that if the streets of Sandy Face were not so amply wide and so many for the size of the little island, the mere foreigner would be as constantly jostled as along the mountain roads of Kuling.

To-day by no means all the foreign residents of Canton live, or even do business, on Shameen. As with the Legation Quarter at Peking, the fiction is kept up that all those except the missionaries do so, but in practice you will find them scattered in half a dozen large communities, and as many small ones, to the east and to the west, up and down and across the river, and across it again from the populous island of Honam to the mainland beyond.

Few of the treaty-ports and important cities of China are known to the outside world by a name that would mean anything to the Chinese who live in them. "Canton" is derived from the English transliteration—a politer word for mispronunciation, slurring, indolence of ear and tongue—of Kwangtung, the province of which it is the capital. To the Chinese, Canton city is Kwangchowfu, and it has been a Chi-



nese city only since 1053 A.D., when the Tai race, which long inhabited this southern part of what is now, but was not then, China proper was driven out in a series of battles and dispersed among the mountains to the southwest, where we know it to-day as Shan or Laos. The people of other provinces insist that the Cantonese still belong to another race, but that is little more than an intentional slur. The women of Kwangtung Province do not bind their feet—and consequently do coolie labor almost equally with the men—partly because of the influence of the tribes that once reigned along this coast. The boat-people are said to be remnants of those tribes and never to have bound their feet. The real Chinese of Kwangtung kept the practice until only a generation ago—even the mother of Sun Yat-sen had "lily feet"—and as it is now almost unknown in that province perhaps there is hope that the whole country will emancipate its women to that extent in another century.

Canton to-day is just as Chinese as Peking, though the two great cities do not talk the same language, and many of the details of life are quite different. Canton food is not Peking food, even though melon-seeds and peanuts, "gambaying" and hot towels, are as common to one as to the other; nor for that matter are the "chow mein" and "chop suey" of our own Chinese restaurants known to either of them. Where Peking has but four tones for the 420 monosyllabic sounds that are said to make up its language, and manages to talk well, nay, at times too much, on any subject, Canton has nine, and it behooves the man who would speak Cantonese and not make embarrassing mistakes to know them. We knew one American, many years a resident of Canton, who went to a mandarin-speaking part of the country and, mixing his tones in trying to say what we with our imperfect alphabet can only spell as *feng hsing*, meaning "take these letters to the post," caused his coolie to go out and hire help to bring him instead a church organ, called "wind-box." I well remember soon after our arrival in China how a Cantonese doctor in Peking raised his hands in helplessness at my request that he tell my rickshaw-man to come back at six o'clock. At least twice during my Chinese wanderings I acted as interpreter between two Chinese, one of them a Cantonese speaking English but no mandarin. It was not unlike the case of the Russian I ran across in an interior town, who looked enough like me to have passed for a brother, yet with whom I could not exchange a word except in the language of the astonished Chinese about us. My own experience was that it is easier in Canton to find some one speaking English than the mandarin tongue of most of the country. But Canton and Peking—Indo-China

and Korea, for that matter—use the same written characters, so that China's civilization, which undoubtedly is the same civilization from northern Manchuria to Hainan, has as its chief vehicle of unity not speech but the written language.

In general the words of mandarin, spoken in varying forms in seven eighths of the territory of China, end in vowels, and those of Canton in consonants; so that there is no such amusement in the names one sees in northern China as in the south, where it is an every-day experience to run across such suggestive ones as Wing On, a progressive department-store on American lines; Tuck Fat, a vision of busy chopsticks; Luk Fat, which may have been slander; Kat Sing, who should have been a member of a Chinese theatrical orchestra; now and then a name bearing a good moral, such as Shun Fat. There was a suggestion of lynch law about the big junk I saw several times on various parts of the Pearl River, the *Hung Fat Lee*, while the "Hang On Company, Building Contractors," with many of the important jobs in Hong Kong itself, no doubt make a specialty of using no scaffolds.

We once saw in Peking a motion-picture the first scenes of which were in China, and we concluded that it either was many years old or had been done in a Los Angeles Canton. For the rickshaws were clumsy, ugly things with wooden buggy-tires, and moved so slowly and ponderously that we could barely recognize in them the very early ancestors of the handsome wire-wheeled, pneumatic-tired vehicles in which we were wafted as noiselessly and smoothly as on a magic carpet across the capital of Kublai Khan, and other cities of the North. But when we reached Canton we found that the movie was right. Somehow we had expected greater rather than less progress in the South. In some ways it is more progressive and up to date, but not in its ordinary means of conveyance. There were those very rickshaws we had sneered at on the screen, their lumbering buggy-wheels rattling and jolting on their crude axles, the hard tires that made a ride as painful as in a Peking-cart registering every hole in the wide but broken surfaces of the new streets, feeling every rut or pebble like a foot in a soleless shoe, so slow that probably, if one came to figure it out, the slowness of life in Canton in spite of its incessant hubbub and apparent rush is due to the languor of the Canton rickshaw-man, who moves like a horse-carriage compared to the automobile swiftness of the runners of the North.

Moreover he is decidedly more expensive, even on a basis of mileage. Here you did not "talk price" for your transportation; there were fixed rates by zones, and no arguing at the end of the run. The cost of a

rickshaw ride was several times more than in Peking, where most Canton prices would have seemed extravagant, and no doubt more nearly fair to the coolie. Yet in the end he was no better off than his Peking contemporary. Exorbitant taxes, the curse of Canton, were assessed against each runner as well as against the rickshaw monopoly owning almost all the vehicles catering to the general public. The coolie paid seventy cents a day for his rickshaw; he was forced to pay graft to a head coolie, to a type of labor-union, taxes for this, that, and the other, and seldom earned an average of a dollar and a half a day in depreciated Canton currency. The Canton police are less gentle with the rickshawmen than are those of New York toward its taxicab drivers. Two rickshaw-coolies fall to fighting over their place in the long line shrieking at the wharves or the entrance to Shameen for the few fares in sight. It is not, of course, a fist-fight after the fashion of the West; the East does not "double its hands" and strike. Instead there is some slapping and much screaming, teeth showing like angry monkeys. A policeman steps up, flails both men across the backs with the kind of riding-crop that takes the place of a billy in Canton, and then snatches a cushion out of each vehicle. It might not work on Broadway, even with automobile cushions, but in the East it saves argument and is an effective form of bail, for if the men do not come to the police-station and pay their fine the cushions will go as squeeze to some one. So no doubt the guardians of such law and order as exist in Canton are only too glad when this indirect summons to court is not obeyed.

If one's way lies by water, as it so often does in Canton, a boat is the obvious answer. Boatmen, or women, work more cheaply, if still not anything like their fellows in the North. Or if one lives out at Tung Shan—"East Mountain," a mere knoll about which are scattered many foreign houses, mission schools, a cluster of residences of the higher employees of what is now only in name the railway to Kowloon—one can trust himself to a frequent Ford bus, though that also will not be inexpensive. If one is wealthy, or employed by a wealthy foreign corporation, or the representative of a foreign government, naturally a private motor-boat or automobile solves the problem. Otherwise one might better walk, for though sedan-chairs can be had from their *hongs*, mere dens opening on many of the narrow streets, in which the men lie smoking opium while one of their number watches for fares, they are not merely costly but their carriers often drowsy with their drug and independent to the point of insolence. I could walk from the home we had in the western suburb out to Tung Shan at the other end of town

in an hour ; that is, the distance of a short five-to-ten-cent trolley-ride in any American city. Yet to take the available Canton forms of transportation, two or three different kinds for the trip, cost a Canton dollar, besides the tip that must be paid if you are to avoid a hubbub at your gate, or at that of the man you have gone to visit, that will advertise your penuriousness to all the neighborhood ; and by the time all is paid you will find that almost an hour has elapsed. But, then, they say that our own Manila, not so far south of Canton, has no chairs, no boats, no rickshaws, hardly a carriage, and that no one will take an automobile out of a garage for less than five pesos. Life in the Orient is by no means so inexpensive as the ludicrous wages of many Orientals would lead the inexperienced to believe.

Anachronism that they seem to us of the West, and even to some modern military commanders of China, the ancient city walls of that land have not only in most cases been left intact, but in almost any city of pride they have been kept as much in repair as the Chinese commonly keep anything, with the possible exception of the graves of their ancestors. There is a certain amount of superstition, too, and of course habit, connected with them ; on my long trip through northwestern China the year before I had seen not a few city walls being almost rebuilt as protection against bandits, soldiery, unruly neighbors, and evil spirits. But the famous old city walls—the plural is justified—of Canton are gone. Unlike almost every other city in “republican” China the “southern capital” has seen all but a corner of its once great barriers converted into boulevards, and even that last corner coolies of both sexes were carrying away, brick by blue-gray brick. It had been one of the most imposing walls in China, mentioned in every account of old Canton—twenty-five feet high, with seventeen gates, and, as the silt built up the bank of the river, a “new city” centuries old had also its separate wall. Since the story is current that Sun Yat-sen once, during his early days of plotting, escaped the Manchu beheader by getting over the city wall in disguise under the very noses of Manchu soldiers, no doubt he took keen pleasure in demolishing it.

Now boulevards run wherever the walls ran before, and in other places as well, so that the old Canton to-day is Saikwan, the western suburb, which was once the newest. As in so many Chinese cities the best parts of town had gradually come to be outside the walls ; now with the wide new streets the best buildings are growing up again within the once walled city. The boulevards were cut through ruthlessly, the

military marking their future course and tearing down, or forcing the owners themselves to tear down, anything that stood in their way, and those who had any land left might build again or decamp, as their desires or their financial condition dictated. At most, written promises some day to pay the owners, or squatters, were given, and neither the givers nor the receivers supposed for a moment that they would ever be kept. The mayor himself, son of the "great reformer" then still heading the "Southern Government," admitted that the promises were worthless. It is a rough way, this Chinese method, but perhaps it is the only one in a country where public spirit is at a low ebb, and where negotiations have a way of running on forever. The big streets left flatiron-shaped bits of houses, narrow shells of buildings, mere stairways to buildings now little more than second stories hanging out over the sidewalks. I suppose it is this furor of "improvement" and modernization that has left Canton with a single *p'ai-lou* or memorial arch over its streets, for their absence seems strange in a great Chinese city.

They are not exactly paved in asphalt, these new streets of Canton. They are dusty, and they are too wide, perhaps, for a place where the sun blazes down unpleasantly most of the months of the year. Their *ma-lu* (horse roads), as the Chinese miscall them, for nothing is so rare as a horse in Canton, may be progress, but it was more pleasant even in the milder sunshine of January to branch off from these broad, hot, dusty, ill-copied boulevards, honking with Fords and disagreeable with other nuisances, and wander away through the narrow old side streets, paved with big slabs of stone worn glass-smooth by millions of soft-shod feet, roofed over with oyster-shell awnings, the streets of old Canton, universal before this Sunny rage for copying the West struck it. The Chinese are inordinately clever at building both their houses and their towns so as to keep out the sunshine where it is too keen; if only they were as good at keeping out the dirt! But of course that would be antithetical; much of their filth is due to this permanency of dark corners where the germ-killing sunshine never falls. The sunless old streets of Canton, across which the wide new ones cut like furrows across a hundred mole-holes, are dirty, of course, but unless they are swarming with the bumping traffic of coolie carriers they are not otherwise unpleasant, for here is still the shaded life of the once walled city, where one can look back into the cool, always fascinating depths of a thousand homes, of all manner of ancient shops and businesses, that have changed but little since the days of Confucius. Besides, China does

not seem China unless you are breasting a howling, jostling mob like a racing mountain stream of humanity, beneath an endless vista of gaudy upright gilded shop-signs; and once you are out on the wide *ma-lu* again where every one has room and there is no excuse to jostle and to shout, where that crowdedness that is the very symbol of China almost disappears, life seems sluggish, anemic, no longer well worth while.

It depends particularly on one's mood how these typical old Chinese streets strike the visitor from the West. Now and then the very hubbub, noise, and smells are pleasing; at other times the torrents of humanity that gush endlessly through these narrow, slimy, slippery passageways, "like rats in a sewer," as some sensitive Latin has put it, seem a setting taken from the infernal regions. It is everywhere the same, this hallucinating swarming, under the sharp breezes of the North or the soft tepid ones of the South, still more impressive than the Hindu pullulation, than even the mad vegetations of the torrid zone, because it is in spite of natural conditions, in a land gnawed to the subsoil by the ceaseless effort of innumerable greedy generations, despoiled of all forest, cultivated to its last palm of earth, sapped of its vigor, yet where man is ever febrilely multiplying himself. There are times when it is almost nauseating, when disgust ends by carrying the day over curiosity. One would like to get out, at any price, were it only for an instant, from that damp crowd and those fetid odors. One seeks the river like a breath of air at an open window in an air-fouled room. It is just as bad as the streets, only another city, moving, but still more dense, quite as noisy, just as feculent. Its junks, its sampans crawling with humanity, jostle one another like cakes of ice in a spring freshet, display the same filth and the same crowds. One takes refuge in the temples. The same swarming inhabits even these. Ten thousand gilded idols swarm here in the hot shade and ten thousand times repeat the invariable grin of their glabrous, moon-shaped faces, a hundred thousand times repeat the same identical gesticulations of their scintillating multiple arms, the same banal and outlandish forms. They all resemble one another; no invention; no variety; the gods like the men who made them seem struck off in innumerable copies by the same depressed, dejected, dreary molding-machine, movement of which never stops. Only number counts, and its enormity at times frightens just as the uniformity makes one downcast. All these temples, all these houses, all these crowds are the same temple, the same house, the same crowd endlessly reborn; at the turn of a street it is the same street that recommences; one has the unbearable impression of eternally wandering

through the same infernal corridors, as in a nightmare, of refalling eternally into the same labyrinths, in which grimace the same mysterious faces. If one escapes to the fields, or rather to the narrow squares of marshy culture which in southern China replaces them, the presence of man is just as evident there. The country is hardly less odoriferous than the city, for in China nothing is wasted, every fertilizing particle is precious preserved to enrich the impoverished soil, and the earth itself, like the stale air of those crowded alleys, is saturated with humanity.

Shameen having no accommodations for us, we took an apartment—I mean it in quite the modern sense—out on the western edge of Saikwan, the west suburb. The municipal authorities of the "Southern capital" had announced their intention of inflicting this also with wide streets, as they had the walled city of which it was the chief overflow, and on paper six broad *ma-lu* already crisscrossed it; but it was our good luck to reach Canton and get away again before this happened, just as we had antedated by a fraction the street-cars which I have no doubt have now ruined Peking entirely. Saikwan was not an easy place to cross for those who do not like the transportation system nature gave them. At certain varying hours one could take a small boat from Shameen out through the "flower-boats" and all manner of water life and traffic, a smelly way under several low bridges, with now and then a bucket of slop thrown down as you passed from the houses falling sheer into the canal on either side, not from design to be sure, yet unpleasant for all that. Some of the boat-dwelling children were tied with ropes; others had a joint of bamboo on their backs as a life-preserver. If a child of mine fell into one of the canals of Saikwan I should probably not want to save it, but the Chinese have curious ways.

Except when the tide was high, which it rarely was when one needed or cared to travel, one could either take an unclean chair borne by unpleasant coolies, or walk. The narrow, ancient-China streets of unmodernized Saikwan were impossible even for rickshaws. To step across the British bridge at Shameen and dive into the labyrinth of strangulated passageways that covered the big west suburb as with a net was to drop from the present, or at least from the nineteenth century, into the China of Marco Polo. Our way led past a bamboo Eiffel tower from which the police watched for fires and other troubles, across a bridge where not a drop of water was seen in all the months we lived there, though one boat sat imbedded in the earth beside it, its family

still living there serenely, across other bridges, a few steps long, with humped backs, that lifted us over the noisome canals up which we could float at high water, now with grounded boats loaded with wood and rice and the like, and rampant with the stench of low water. It was a maze of streets through which a stranger could not have found his way with his life depending upon it, yet which we came to thread day or night as easily as a blind man finds his way by instinct. Here the old-style streets paved with immense slabs of stone, smooth as glass, were further constricted by the tables and wares of street-venders, that ubiquitous, raucous, tireless gentry, here and there by a street idol, on an already too narrow corner, where the masses stopped to burn much joss in the vain hope of better luck. Peep-hole shows, makers of magic, all manner of copper-catching schemes and contrivances lined the way, especially during festival occasions, such as the lunar New Year; in places our route lay under awnings made of the inside of oyster-shells that reduced still further the filtered sunshine of Canton streets, many here and there divided by wooden barriers with shoulder-broad gates as a protection against fires, or riots, or what not; finally a last bridge with an outlook suggestive of Venice, still more so at low tide to the olfactory nerves, and we broke out upon an untended open space across which was home.

In Canton, where thieves are legion and beggars and food-hunting curs even more plenteous, yet where the heat is often intense, there are sliding doors of upright poles, so that while marauders cannot break in and steal, the family can sit inside in airy comfort, working, smoking, playing mah-jongg, quite indifferent to the comprehensive views of the sometimes picturesque domestic life within that is offered the passer-by. We lived in a proud residential section, too, or at least went through one on our way home, with such names as Many Impressions Great Street, in which still lived not a few rich people in the Cantonese sense of the word. Now and then we passed an open house-door with a coffin inside, right center, as it were, at one side of the room, the ancestral tablet straight back from the door, tables with food in front of it, people in white clothes bowing and scraping. Or it might be a bigger house dimly lighted with candles, priests in their two-color robes of office, like an Episcopal surplice, not too recently laundered, standing in formation, chanting, to the accompaniment of instrumental "music." White and blue cloths would be draped over the street outside, the door flanked by immense paper lanterns, lighted by night. Sometimes these things remained the full hundred days of acute mourning, sometimes



they were put up for a week or two and then taken down, to appear again toward the end of the hundred days, for most such things are rented for funerals, as similar ones, including most of the wedding presents, are for marriages.

We were struck by the number of funerals during our short winter in Canton. Smallpox was not rare; even some of our foreign community died of it; or perhaps many hurried up funerals that had been put off, in order to have them over with the sinister Year of the Pig and start anew with the luck-bringing Year of the Rat and a new cycle of Cathay. The whole families dressed in white, the women even with white in their hair, but sometimes only a small boy was left to do the real worshipping of the departed and the ancestors in general, for mere women cannot appease the spirits of the dead, much as they are expected to honor and feed them. Along the wide *ma-lu* of the once walled city a Chinese funeral with all its barbaric noises and colors looked out of place, but out here in the narrow, Confucian streets of our quarter it seemed in keeping. The one was as natural as a peasant burning joss and bowing down to the floor in a temple; the other was as incongruous as the man I once saw in foreign dress and of evident Western training kowtowing in his back yard before an up-to-date photograph of his father and offering the hungry spirit of the deceased old gentleman a bowl of American apples. The ancient and the modern constantly rub elbows in Canton, as when coolies carrying a red bridal chair and its many appurtenances wear above their brilliant red jackets and ragged, once-blue trousers tropical helmets of khaki with bright red bands.

One night on our way home from a Chinese feast in a famous restaurant of our section we passed a long array of things to be burned at midnight at the grave of a rich man just passed away, and among them was an automobile, of frame and paper like the rest, of no familiar make, but in the darkness so lifelike that had our gathering not been so missionary in atmosphere some one of us might easily have stepped into it with the Canton variation of "Home, James." A chauffeur and a high-class servant sat with respectful stiffness in the front seat, and in the back was a lovely lady in the richest garb, with a gay umbrella and glistening jewels; for according to the Chinese a man needs a woman quite as much as servants and food and transport in the after-world. All these, too, would be burned, victims to a cruel old Chinese custom—tremble not, for they also were only of paper. The most Cantonese touch was a paper Italian flag flying from the front of the paper automobile. The friendly fellow who showed us all about

the streetful of false things he had been set to guard could not explain nationality; to him the human race consisted of Chinese and outside barbarians; but he seemed to think that a foreign flag would be useful in the next world as in this, against property-confiscating generals and Tuchuns, and no doubt the Italian banner had appealed to his taste or to the available material.

The months we spent in Canton seemed to be the wedding time of year, for we were constantly hearing the fire-crackers of jollification and finding mat-covered structures over the streets on our way home, such a *peng*, rented also, signifying that the house within had added a new bride to its ancient family line, and sometimes remaining a week or more while "musical" celebrations day after day went on within. But of course there are more weddings in China than in our Western lands. In the first place every one gets married, most of them early and many of the men often, and no one trusts his future to a colorless justice of the peace or city-hall clerk; besides, gussy statisticians have been telling us for several generations that there are four hundred million people in what once had the audacity to call itself the Celestial Empire.

We lived not far from Laichee-wan, a park named for the chief fruit of the Cantonese region. As a park it was much run down, but there you would see solemn old men, all the way from the small merchant to the banker, come with their birds in cages from which they removed the cloth covers and, hanging them from a limb, let the captives sing for an hour or two while they themselves meditated and perhaps smoked. The Chinese do not keep dogs, in our Western sense of that verb, but they are inordinately fond of feathered pets. Now and again one met a rich man's aviary, half a dozen—in one case I met ten—servants in a row each carrying one of those very high cages made in Canton to give the birds as much flying-room as possible; but no man, however rich and important, scorned to bring birdy out for an airing himself if he had the time. There are Chinese who keep thrushes in cages and say it is a fine bird, not if it sings, but if it fights well. Most of our Canton neighbors, however, had more esthetic tastes.

On the subject of keeping birds in cages, the rich comprador of the most important British bank in China had one of his homes within shouting-distance of our third-story windows, an immense establishment all but surrounded by canals as by a moat, and in contrast to the Italian-Chinese architecture of the rest of the estate he had erected overhanging a canal a house for his favorite wife, a "frame" house such as one sees nowhere in China, not merely all of wood but with clapboards and

shingles, wooden "stoop" and blinds, altogether the most incongruous thing in Canton, an "American-style" house according to the husband, whose early-day travels in the United States had evidently been confined to the rural parts. The man himself lived in Hong Kong now, like so many of the rich men of Canton under Sun Yat-sen, for fear of kidnapping and kindred troubles, doubled later when he was charged with a conspiracy to drive out the terror of the Manchus. But the favorite wife would not, I believe, have been molested in her clapboard love-nest if she had chosen to give her master a furlough and return to it; that seems to be one of the few ways in which the Chinese do not often try to injure their enemies.

Two women, two girls, and a boy of a boat-dwelling family just outside our gate, who now and then paddled us to town, were all working to get money enough to marry off the boy. The girls were named Eighteen and Twenty respectively, because that was the number of boils they had had as babies. The American mission hospital known as Yao Tsai just over a compound wall from us also yielded bits of interest. There the wife of one of the chair-coolies at the miserable little *hong* around the corner had a baby born. When a nurse visited her later in her little den of a house, for which she paid five dollars "small money" a month, she remarked that she had never found the place wanting before, but that a week in the clean, light hospital had completely changed her point of view toward it. Discontent that is better avoided is one of the results of mission work. Patients at the hospital, by the way, were not allowed to die comfortably in their beds but had to be taken to the dispensary or the morgue as the end drew near; otherwise no one would occupy the room or the bed afterward. There was a great deal of beriberi, especially after childbirth, among the wealthier woman patients, often leaving the limbs paralyzed, though not always incurably. A mold on the polished rice of the well-to-do was considered responsible for this, an ailment that the red rice of the poor people did not bring them.

Just under our windows was a kind of lily-pond. Soon after we moved in at New Year's, men and women began to work in it, the oozy black slime up to their thighs and biceps, yet seeming not in the least to mind the task, cheery and gay even under the rain that so often made us want almost midwinter clothing, rain-coats made of a single big stiff palm-leaf covering only their backs. They dug up roots that looked like great beetles, like chains of huge oval yellow beads or hard little onions. These seemed to serve the people as food, and one

saw great loads of such water-chestnuts along the canals, bushel baskets of them in the markets, the parings fed to hogs. Beyond this cross between a pond and a mud-hole was a mat-shed building where gambling went on noisily, often all night; and from another window we could look down into a row of sheds filled with long tables, where hundreds of coolie-clad men came several times a month to take part in what seemed to be an intricate Oriental form of lottery-drawing. From a little farther beyond came now and then the deep-voiced whistle of an American locomotive that carried us suddenly back home in spirit, however impotent it was to do so in the flesh; for though the American-built line northward that passed so near us had set out blithely two decades before for Peking, it still fetches up at some then mysterious place barely 140 miles away which I was not to see for almost another year. It was like walking the ties in my own land to stroll out along this—for the line was built by Americans and unfortunately for it taken over by the Chinese before completion—though the fields were not the same, nor the incessant crowded villages, nor the people who made it a highway, nor anything but the railroad itself and its rolling-stock.

Perhaps one of our greatest surprises about Canton, noting that it is within the tropic zone and almost on a line with Calcutta, was to find it by no means always a city of white ducks and cold drinks, but that even a brilliant sky there could be filled with iced sunshine. It was an undecided climate. We had perfect June weather, without a fleck of cloud, for Christmas; then the north wind brought November for New Year's, though green vegetables still came trotting into town. There is stagnating heat in summer, to be sure; we saw January-to-March days that were uncomfortably warm; but when the rains pour, as they did for days and even weeks at a time while my unfortunate family was housed there, though just then I was down where summer reigned supreme, Canton can be dismal indeed. An American sailor on a gunboat just up from Manila, not many hundred miles due south, standing deck-guard with crisped hands and chattering teeth, is one of the true pictures of the "southern capital" during its short winter. Experienced travelers have learned not to throw away their winter underwear and fur coats before they come to often sunny Canton. Sometimes the rains continue until the whole region is flooded, though that is more likely to happen in summer. In those days one goes everywhere in Saikwan by boat, even at low tide. There was ample corroboration for the story told of an American woman who taught in the modern three-story brick school-building that included our apartment, who once at flood-

time had dived under the lintel of the door into the high dining-room in order to look for something valuable inside—and found herself swimming in the little air-space beneath the ceiling beside a six-foot snake, which she swears was a cobra.

Though there is seldom much color to a Chinese city as a whole, there is always plenty of local color—and scent. The streets of Canton yielded endless things of interest. Here it was a girl juggler whom a foreigner could do a kindness by stopping a moment to watch, for that was sure to bring her several times the crowd she could gather by herself. It is a strange trait of the Chinese that even in a city where there are hundreds of foreign residents, and foreign visitors almost every day of the year, which has been inhabited by foreigners for a century, hordes still gather to gaze in good-natured, open-mouthed wonder at one who halts to tie his shoe-lace. Native medicine-shops, especially those of which the proprietors have a Western training, are much given to showing in their windows pickled babes in each of their nine months of development. A baby writhing with smallpox on the counter of an open shop, its face and its unclothed stern pustulated with the disease at its height, does not astound old Canton residents. A man with a boiled-lobster face and a colored band about his head as a sign of quarantine is no less commonplace. If one could get out soon after dawn—as a matter of fact I saw it on my way home early one morning, but do not misjudge; that was the hour of arrival from a two months' trip into the west—one found that our part of town was noted for the live fish in tubs on the shoulder-poles of trotting coolies, which splash one as they pass, and for women and children singing the merits of such wares as they jog through the already busy streets. Then the flowers that hung so dejectedly from the baskets of the sellers at a more reasonable hour were freshest, and still at prices to make New York gasp with envy.

A kind of macaroni widely used in southern China was made in quantities in the outskirts of our west suburb and hung or spread out on raised racks of bamboo splints to dry in the sun, flecking the landscape here and there with what looked at first glance like scattered acres of snow-fields. The stuff is made by grinding in a stone mill rice that has been soaked in water, straining it through a cloth bag, and crushing it again in a stone mortar. The dough thus formed is next squeezed through a crude native implement related to a strainer or colander, under sanitary conditions that would bring no shout of joy from a firm believer in germs, into a skillet of boiling water, from which

it is skimmed, dropped into cold water, dried under exceedingly public conditions, and arranged in coils in the leaf-lined baskets in which it goes to market. Did Marco Polo bring macaroni and vermicelli to China or did he take this Celestial idea back to Venice with him? The same query assails the traveler there with regard to what the Italians call *mora*, a simple betting-game in which the two players throw out a hand each with a certain number of fingers open, at the same time shouting a number in the hope that it will be that of the combined fingers displayed. One sees the coolies of China engaged in it almost as frequently as the workmen of Italy.

There is a group of villages not far from Canton City, by the way, that seem to have been named for the wandering Venetian, their combined name being "Poh-loh." In olden days their chief temple was to the god of the South Seas, but Polo visited them about 1290 and left behind, by chance or design, a man of his suite. This poor fellow used to gaze out to sea with his hand over his forehead, according to the story, so that after he died the pious people of the place, no doubt to propitiate his spirit rather than to honor him, put a statue of him, the hand over his forehead and the anxious look on his face, in place of the sea-god. There he still stands, known far and wide as the "Foreign Devil Looking for Polo"—in Chinese "foreign" and "from the sea" are virtually synonymous—a statue plainly intended to represent a white man, though thanks either to a purpose or to the smoke of centuries of incense he looks more like a Moor—who knows but that Polo himself, with his wandering forebears, had Moorish blood in his veins? To this day tons of joss-sticks a year are burned to him by these simple fisher-folk, though probably the original motive for their worship is lost in the dim land of memory along with those of a thousand other of their superstitions. Some years ago an American missionary came to tell the simple people of Poh-loh that they had been worshipping for centuries a mere man like the rest of us, and to propose that they worship instead the god of Polo—though the god of Polo was probably not exactly the twentieth-century Protestant god—to which the people agreed, and helped to build a chapel. But that does not mean that they are taking any chances of losing whatever benefits come from propitiating the spirit of the white man gazing out to sea by not burning joss to him; foreigners have seen them doing so as late as the present years of grace.

Now that the walls were down we could walk directly from our suburb into the long, narrow, shaded shopping streets of all Canton, and see a thousand forms of handcraft and medieval merchandising.

The thick brown husk of the cocoanut is pounded apart and torn and shredded by men tucked away in little holes in the wall and made into many things. Many more are made of bamboo, all over Kwangtung Province, all South China, all the tropics of the eastern hemisphere. Women and children more often than men split them up into long narrow strips, for the making of ropes, baskets, the winding of wickerwork furniture in place of the ratan that comes up in great doubled bundles from the jungles of the Pacific islands, for scores of other uses. The trades are segregated by streets, after the usual Oriental manner. There are long streets of embroidery-shops, where men and boys and a few women sit before brilliant cloths stretched in horizontal frames and decorate not only garments but those pictures in embroidery so prized as gifts among the Chinese. "Artists" sit before crude easels in the doors of other shops, daubing leisurely but ceaselessly, apparently oblivious to the ever-changing crowd that is forever looking on. "Blackwood-furniture Street" offers everything in that line known to China, from mahogany to mere polished pine knots, from those carved partitions used in the best houses to baby-carriages delivered at your door for the equivalent of an American half-dollar. In another street a vista of straw sandals stretches to infinity; in that, the "oyster-shell" windows and roof-extensions that help Canton to escape the sun are made of what are really huge clam-shells sawed as thin as isinglass and translucent, if not transparent; beyond, knife-handles, spoons, and a host of trinkets are fashioned from mother-of-pearl; horns of cattle or the water-buffalo are turned into lanterns; glass bangles and bracelets of imitation jade, wigs, mustaches, beads, no doubt for actors, switches made by the same men for mere women, are laid out in heterogeneous displays; for a hundred yards heaps of brass filings and a tendency for the teeth to stand on edge mark the making of the brass padlocks of China, in which the key is pushed rather than turned; silks, curios, mere junk—there is no end to the displays that crowd close on either side. Nothing is wasted; old electric-light bulbs are made into little goldfish-bowls; rags are pasted in layers to take the place of leather; perhaps the two outstanding features of the crafts of China are their home-work, handwork in public and the immense amount of labor that is wasted on materials that cannot last long enough to be worth it.

One street in our suburb was given over entirely to silk-shops, a dozen polished men sitting ready to serve you; in China such places have several times more clerks than customers. Here are shops selling sandalwood, bits in the rough which people take home to burn to the

household gods, some made into carved boxes, some into the frames of peacock-feather fans; farther on are fans of rooster-feathers, of mere paper, elaborately decorated or merely scrawled with a few Chinese characters, fans of everything from which a fan could possibly be made, whole streets in which you can pick up every manner of junk, new or second-hand, all those innumerable useless trinkets of which the Chinese are so fond. A dismal little alley facing the compound wall of the French cathedral is almost the ivory center of China. Here six, ten, sometimes a full dozen ivory spheres are intricately carved one inside the other, the outer one no larger than a billiard-ball, often, to the never-ending surprise of the foreigner, by mere boys who nonchalantly whittle away as if they were merely playing. One sees a few real elephant-tusks, too few it seems, until one realizes that a single tusk may yield more than two hundred pounds of ivory. Even these are dirty little dens wide open on the street, and youths chisel away on the precious material right beside shops where the shin-bones of cattle furnish the "ivory." But one soon learns to recognize the peculiar grain of the real thing, and a few places in Ivory Street have a trustworthy reputation. Beads, combs, bracelets, powder-boxes, still more elaborate things—the more nearly immaculate little sales-rooms behind the open shops are no place to bring an inconsiderate wife, if such be your misfortune, in your days of adversity.

Nor will at least the feminine stroller overlook the pins, brooches, and other forms of personal adornment made of kingfisher feathers, once used as a sign of royalty under the Mongols and forbidden to the ordinary people. The dainty feathers of those vivid little streaks of blue that one so often sees flit across a rice-field are laid out and treated with some preparation that gives them the appearance of being enameled, while the bird itself no doubt is eaten. The more materially minded will note rough burlap bags of cattle-bones and masses of hogs' bristles just as they come from the butcher-shop in the doorways of other establishments given over to the making of tooth-brushes; for contrary to a natural impression large numbers of these are used in China, to say nothing of those that come to us as from other and less repulsive sources. Old women wash the bristles—less for cleanliness' sake than to save paying for foreign matter perhaps—weigh, and tie them together in little bundles, clipping the ends off evenly. Men and boys saw up the bones, and when these have been polished and perforated with rows of little holes, women and girls take bunches of the bristles in their teeth to compact them, and sew them in.



Here, too, and in adjoining narrower streets are the makers of mah-jongg sets—in northern mandarin "ma-chow" or "ma-chang," according to the French of Indo-China "matchang," in Canton "ma-cheuk"; suit yourself; by whatever name you call them the two characters stand for a kind of hemp and a species of sparrow that feeds upon it. Shanghai and other cities are more given to this trade than Canton, but even here it flourishes, for whatever their status now in fad-pursuing Western lands one still hears the bird-decorated dominoes clicking all night in houses and hotels everywhere in China that the game is not forbidden, as they did decades ago and no doubt will decades to come. The "ivory" is prepared by sawing up the bones of cattle that have come to a violent if natural end. There is a greater market for bones in China than in the chicken-raisingest county in America, and one of the many ways your Chinese servant augments a meager income is by selling these, along with the tin cans, bottles, and other by-products of the kitchen scornfully discarded by the Western housewife. The mah-jongg maker works entirely free-hand, like so many of his fellow-craftsmen, sawing the bones, as well as the bamboo from farther south, on crude wooden frames with miniature buck-saws, tiny streams of water falling upon the growing fissures. Then mere boys, more often than men, standing or sitting facing the swarming street, stamp the figures, the four Chinese points of the compass, and all the rest, and cut them out deftly with triangular-pointed chisels on bamboo handles, boring depressions in them with the simple bit, manipulated with a cross-piece and a spinning string, that is used for all such purposes in China.

Here are hundreds of ordinary-looking fellows, wearing only a pair of blue cotton trousers most of the year, producing marvelous bits of wood-carving with only rough patterns, or none at all, seeming to be left mainly to their own ingenuity, yet producing things as intricate as the world has to offer, as artistic as could be expected of an imagination held in check by the philosophy of Confucius. The minute subdivision of the Canton trades is suggested by the fact that among the city's seventy-two ancient *hongs* or guilds one is of dealers in articles made of pear-tree wood.

Among the persistent sights and sounds of Canton streets one is not likely soon to forget the handling of money. In large transactions, among the Chinese as well as the foreigners, Hong Kong bank-notes are the medium of exchange. Silver dollars are rarely seen in the "southern capital," and except for the coppers to be found almost everywhere in the land, Canton does its ordinary business in twenty-cent

pieces by hand. It consists of a board about two feet square with these, its only product, and so often debased their quality, that it takes almost or fully six of them to equal a "Mex" dollar, and one may live for years in Canton without ever seeing a larger coin. Retail merchants have evolved a form of cash-register to save counting these twenty-cent pieces by hand. It consists of a board about two feet square with many depressions of slight depth and twenty-cent size, and in larger establishments a coolie, perhaps several of them, is kept busy all day long throwing handfuls of coins upon this, shaking it until every depression is occupied, sliding off the residue, and tossing the boardful thus counted into a receptacle not unlike a bushel basket. The constant clash of coins is one of the typical sounds of the earliest treaty-port, and so expert does the Chinese ear become that if there is one false coin—and they abound, even though the good ones are hardly worth nine cents in our money—it is detected amid the rattle of the lot and found by a process of elimination.

Money varies in value throughout China largely because it is so heavy and the methods of transportation so cumbersome. The notes even of foreign banks have only a local currency, and to take a thousand dollars in silver, to say nothing of coppers and worse, from one place to another is a task for several coolies, often for several days. I have seen forty men trotting across a station platform to a train for Peking with two well-sealed boxes of silver dollars each, all to accomplish something that with us would consist of writing a check and putting it into an envelope. The traveler from Shanghai, where at the moment the "Mex" dollar exchanged for 190 coppers, found the twenty-cent piece worth only twenty-four of those same coppers in Canton. In Szechuan the Canton coins that could be had in their home town at almost or quite six to the dollar passed at par—and so on, to an arithmetical nightmare, all over the country. Naturally there is much "smuggling," as the laws of most provincial dictators in China call it, of money from one place to another, especially by the employees on ships and trains. If a dollar in Chicago were worth twelve dimes that passed at their face-value in New York, the chances are that now and again a Pullman porter, if not a conductor or a commercial traveler, would be tempted to tuck away as many dimes as he could carry eastward. But there I am getting off into the mazes and morasses of Chinese currency again.

Given doubtful money and incredible, ceaseless taxation, it is not strange that prices were higher in Canton than in many other parts of

China. This was reflected in the minute purchases of the crowded and often poverty-stricken community. It was no unusual sight to see not merely a child but a woman, even a man, gravely carrying home a fish-head or a cubic inch of meat swinging at the end of a piece of grass string. Prices were higher, too, because labor-unions flourish there. Masons were getting \$1.20 "small money" a day, and "quit if you look cross-eyed at them," according to an American architect, who attributed the scarcity of housing, as serious for Chinese and foreigners alike in Canton as in any city of the West, to labor's "exorbitant" demands. The coolie class was noticeably more independent in the North, than in the most of China for that matter. Even tea-house waitresses had formed a union. Contributions to these unions were even more drastically collected than in some parts of our own fair land. A coolie whom I called to carry my bag from the steamer wharves to Shameen was stopped by a man sitting just outside the gate, who demanded ten cents. The coolie had no money, but turned over his badge, to be redeemed when I had paid him off. Trust the Chinese to find a way of collecting lodge-dues even from hand-to-mouth workers. The line between such dues and squeeze pure and simple was not very clear; the waitresses in tea-houses had to pay a fixed tax to night-loafers not to be molested on their way home after dark.

Strikes were the order of the day. The recent victory of the seamen's union over the Government of Hong Kong had greatly emboldened the unions of Canton. Just then it was the unloaders of rice-boats that were striking. Formerly every boat-load had given one sack of rice as a kind of squeeze to be divided between the rice-dealer and the unloading coolies. Now the unloaders demanded it all; also there was a question of the sweepings!

It was our luck to have left Canton before the "Shameen strike," but no harm is done by getting ahead of my story. The French governor of Indo-China and a large suite went to Japan ostensibly to pin on some ribbons and be pinned in turn. On the way home they went up to Canton and a big dinner was given them at the only hotel Shameen boasts. In the midst of it some one threw a bomb, not in the form of after-dinner pyrotechnics but of the literal, material kind, through a convenient window into the assembly. The governor-general was of course untouched; so were all his suite. But several members of the permanent French colony, unimportant persons on the edge of the festivities, were killed and injured. Nor was it surprising that an Annamese whose body was found floating in the river a few days later should have been

found guilty of the crime, just as the perpetrators of outrages against Japanese officials anywhere are always *ipso facto* Koreans. The governor did not make a hundred-per-cent impression among at least the Anglo-Saxons by hurrying away next morning without waiting to see how the score of injured French residents came out or to attend the funeral of the three men and two women killed. Urgent affairs of state called him back to Hanoi forthwith. The British consul ran true to form in harshly interpreting his bounden duty; the authorities of Shameen, startled into a realization of the long-evident fact that the rule about Chinese not being permitted on the island except for proper reasons was being loosely enforced, ordered that henceforth no "outside resident" was to be admitted after 9:30 at night without a pass from the foreign functionaries. There was also, I believe, some requirement of the photograph of the pass-holder, which would of course have been necessary to enforce the order. Chinese had long been accustomed to use the Shameen Bund as a place to sit and chatter in the evening, rather than make a clean, untroubled gathering-place of their own. Led by the comprador of the Canton branch of a large American firm, all Chinese engaged on the island struck. Not a bank bookkeeper, clerk, policeman, coolie, cook, "boy," *ama*, or any other variety of Chinese, postal employees excepted, would set foot upon the island. British and American business men, never before seen at anything harder than holding down a desk-chair and perhaps elevating a cocktail-glass or a tennis-racket, had to put on khaki trousers and unload with their own fair hands the food supplies that came up from Hong Kong. The city merchants would not sell to Shameen residents; or if they did, there was no one to carry the stuff to the island. Sun Yat-sen was accused of stirring up the people against the foreigners, to whom he had not been showing full brotherly love. The strikers said they had nothing against foreigners elsewhere in Canton; the difficulty was to prove oneself no Shameener. If kind-hearted people out at Tung Shan or across the river at Paak Hok Tung or down at the "C.C.C." tried to help by inviting the island aristocrats to meals, their servants threatened to strike also. The fact that they were acting less from choice than from compulsion did not help matters. Rickshaw-men began to refuse to pull foreigners, whatever their residence. The American consulate had to get its meals from gunboats in the harbor. Foreign gunboats had to be used to carry men on important missions. The strike extended to all British business men; the foreign steamers from Hong Kong had to stop running because no Chinese would unload them at Canton and

no Chinese would travel on them, and the few foreign passengers did not pay for the fuel the engines consumed. The Chinese boats would not take foreign passengers; the railway to Kowloon had been broken for years. The strike lasted for seven weeks, and a thorough Chinese strike is no laughing matter. When at last it was settled, the authorities of Shameen knew how it feels to climb down off a high horse.

The dangers of life in Canton were much impressed upon us, especially before we got there. At Hong Kong a letter came out to us before our steamer from Shanghai could dock warning me not to bring my family to Canton until I had come up and investigated for myself, as the writer would not be responsible for what might happen. I came, saw, and laughed, and we settled down for the short winter. But the outside world retained its hint of terror when the name of Canton was mentioned. Now and again the place was deluged with a round-the-world tourist party. The American consul in Hong Kong would let only a fraction of them go up the river, as he feared the effect on Canton if several hundred ascended upon it at once; but there was no great difficulty in restricting the party, I understand, because of the dread most of these unseasoned travelers have of wantonly risking their precious lives. Those brave enough to come arrived by the regular day steamer at 3:30 in the afternoon, and by special arrangement with another British boat that usually left at five they managed to remain until 5:30, which gave them ample time, of course, to know all about Canton. Half of them were rushed out to the Flowery Pagoda by automobiles, the rest coming more slowly in chairs. There loads were exchanged, and while those who had been whisked out by gasoline and had finished their seeing took the chairs back, so that they, too, could have their share of that vivid, unique experience of the East, those who had arrived by chair saw the same sights and were motored back to the Bund in time for the steamer. Once La-chieh, as my wife's biblical name is rendered in Chinese, in my company got tangled up with such a party, for that was about the hour of our own sight-seeing, and the native guides all but threw us into the automobiles or the chairs by force and pursued us shrieking for some distance when we escaped on foot. Now and again I took the trouble to go on board the boat for a few moments before it sailed and, being often mistaken for a member of the party, I got many a story of the horrors of life in Canton, as seen so vividly in a short two hours—though, to tell the truth, I got much more of the civic perfection of Podunk by comparison—and then as the whistle

sounded I would leave the flabbergasted tourists open-mouthed with my bravery as I walked ashore with the casual assurance that I lived in a far more Chinese part of that dreadful city than their guides had dared show them.

Though I did not see this other incident in person, it came to me directly enough through an American missionary resident who did, and whose veracity is not questionable even on the score of joking. A party of tourists came one day by the night boat or a special steamer. At any rate they were there in time to be motored and chaired over the usual jumps and get back to the old foreign hotel on Shameen in time for lunch. When this was over there seems to have been an unwonted hitch in the well-laid plans of the tourist bureau responsible for them, for they had time to draw their breath and even to stroll by themselves several times up and down the embankment in front of the hotel. Perhaps they had lost their guide, or he them. Be that as it may, they sat down in the veranda chairs. One bulk of a man had with him a shiny, expensive new camera, and he was eager to take some street pictures. He complained that nowhere had he been let alone near anything that he could not photograph on the main street at home, and he was dying to cross that creek and get some pictures. A woman resident of Shameen happening to pass at that moment spoke up in the friendly way of exiles in the East and told him nothing would be easier; if he would cross that bridge and keep swinging around to his right he could return by the other and find himself back on the island again. For an instant it looked as if he would actually do this brave thing. But he hesitated, lost, and sat down heavily again in a veranda chair. His bold ambition, however, would not subside. He took to pacing up and down the embankment, gazing longingly across the narrow creek with its unbroken line of house-boats a short running jump away on the further side, coddling his precious camera. Finally he turned to another big man of the party with: "Henry, won't you just step across there with me long enough to get a few pictures? We won't get out of sight and . . ."

"Hennery," shrieked that gentleman's good lady, thereby sparing him the trouble of getting out of this dangerous and unexpected predicament by his own wits, "you will do nothing of the kind! You know perfectly well that Book and Slickum warned us before we left San Francisco that it is dangerous to go anywhere in these awful countries without a guide, and sometimes with one."

Abandoned even by "Hennery," the camera-toter took to striding up

and down the embankment again, his more than six feet in the throes of a bitter conflict between common sense and the spirit of adventure. Finally, halting clear out on the coping of the canal edge and half shaking his fist at the native city across the way, through which my wife and mother, American teachers and school-girls, walked or were chaired by half-naked coolies daily, not infrequently late at night and alone, he cried:

"By G-g-u-um, if I did n't have a wife and four children at home I'd go across that creek all by myself!"

To be sure, the first view of the "rats in a sewer" is not unnaturally terrifying. Not only the tourist bureaus, fearful of the awful publicity that would follow a scratch on the nose of one of their precious charges, but Hong Kong, eager for their trade, fill these poor human sheep with incredible tales of the dangers of Canton. There is really not much need of this, for the Canton shopkeepers do not get much out of them; they not only do not dare go into those dreadfully narrow streets where the good shops are, but no time is left them for unguided activities. But ground was already broken for a big new hotel on the eastern French nose of Shameen, and if misgovernment ever ceases the merchants of Canton may some time get more tourist trade than those of Hong Kong—and the market be completely spoiled for mere residents.

The sight of a party of tourists shopping along the China coast is not one to be passed lightly by. Most of them drop in and ask prices just as they would at home, calmly paying at least three or four times as much as the shopkeeper would have been delighted to receive. With those who know the Chinese merchant negotiations usually open with something like, "My lowest price is twenty dollars; how much will you give?" and drags serenely on until an agreement is amicably reached at the fair price of five or six dollars. Even in Canton, where our scanty mandarin was useless, the tourist would have been floored with astonishment to see what bargains my wife got with nothing but "*Geh tung on?*" (Canton's form of "How much?") and the ability to finger the abacus. But merchants who know a bit of English quickly change their methods, though less for old residents than when a tourist party descends upon them. On those gala days shops catering to such trade do not wish to be bothered with local shoppers, even old foreign residents who have long been customers. I know of an American woman who came to pay a bill on one of those rare days when tourists were buying in Canton and was quickly told that she did not owe anything—true, the debt amounted to only \$5 Canton currency, but the Chinese do not

let money slip lightly through their fingers—in order not to have her hanging around and perhaps hinting the truth when she saw the robbery being practised on the simple tourists. I am reminded of a group of American tourists of the least amiable type who, happening to drop into a famous curio-shop in an important south coast city just in time to impress into service as interpreter a fellow-countrywoman long resident there, concluded purchases totaling several thousand dollars, during which they had been anything but courteous either to the shopkeeper or to the impressed go-between, by flashing forth the sum named in good American greenbacks. The merchant, who had of course been thinking in “Mex” if not indeed in the still cheaper local dollars, turned an expressionless face toward the interpreter, who had her revenge merely by gazing back at him without the flicker of an eyelid as he slowly dropped the money into his Chinese till. The pity was that the lady not only would not accept the “little present” which the grateful Celestial tried to give her from his most precious stock, but she will no longer buy there because he always quotes her prices at a fraction of the real lowest value.

To the average American the Oriental custom of asking more than you expect to receive is put down as a form of dishonesty. Yet how long have we had “fixed prices” in the United States? Moreover, your average merchant at home often charges you just as much more than he should as the Chinese merchant asks as his “first price.” Where your druggist, your bookseller gets a profit of 40 per cent and more by sticking to his price, because his customers have long been too proud, too wealthy, or too hamstrung with habit to protest, to try to beat him down, your Chinese merchant merely starts his bargaining at a point that, if he stuck to it, would give him about the same profit as the man at home demands. The difference is that competition is so keen in this overcrowded land of men temperamentally incapable of price-boosting combinations that the Chinese has to be satisfied if he can bargain his way to a profit at which the Westerner would sneer with disgust.

However, to come back to our timid tourists; there were of course dangers in Canton. We heard so many rumors of them that fire-crackers were somewhat disturbing in the middle of the night, when a string of them sounds so much like the rat-a-tat of machine-guns we were always half expecting, the big ones like the boom of cannon. There were constant brawls among the motley collection of soldiery overrunning the place, endless injustices to the Cantonese people; but the dangers to foreigners were really not great. For the Chinese it



was another story; kidnapping, assassination, unjust punishment, military confiscation, wanton destruction, were the common lot. The papers daily reported such bits as:

Mr. Wan, proprietor of a large paper firm, had his six-year-old son kidnapped and held for five thousand dollars ransom. The father could not find the money at once, so the kidnapper has sent him the little boy's little finger, with a promise of more to come on every day the payment is delayed.

Kidnapping being a favorite Chinese sport, it was surprising to find no apparent tendency to steal the children of foreigners, surely a rich possibility. Some of the crimes might have been imported directly from our own cities, as when two men posing as electric-light inspectors were let into the home of well-to-do people near us and proceeded to rob them. The little boy of the family came home just then, sized up the situation with Chinese quickness, and got the police. The sequel had nothing in common with New York; no bail, no lawyers, no expert alienists, no months of delay, no acquittal on insufficient evidence or reversal of the decision by a higher court because a "t" thereof had not been crossed. The men were paraded through the streets for a few hours as soon as an announcement of their crime could be hastily written and appended to them, and then were shot out in the open space in front of our gate, left there the rest of the day with the same rude placard still beside them, and toward dusk were carried away in slap-dash coffins. Let a man so much as steal a gold bangle from a singsong-girl and he was shot before the sun set, or rose, as the case might be—unless he happened to have special influence with the military. The mayor of Canton, who was none other than Sun Fo, only son of Sun Yat-sen, petitioned the "Generalissimo," to wit, his famous father, through official channels and the public prints, not to let the soldiers shoot men in the public streets; but as we shall see in due season the poor old gentleman did not have much authority in his declining days over the hordes he had brought in to bolster up his precarious cause. But even though there were unpleasant sights and sounds, and consuls spent much time in warning those who would not listen, the foreigner really had less reason to worry about his wife and children anywhere in the streets of Canton than in any one of the first hundred American cities.

Perhaps it was because we still had Peking and Nanking in mind that we found Canton by no means so large a city, in extent at least, as we had expected. We could walk in an hour from the further edge

of the western suburb to the ancient Five-Story Pagoda on the northernmost corner of what was for centuries the city wall. We used to like to wander there, not only because it was the only remnant of the old barrier that was still shrinking and yielding its ancient materials to new use, but because of the view it gave of all the city and much beyond. Tumbled masses of what had once been great concrete forts over which Sun Yat-sen and one of his former pals had fought desperately two or three years before were excellent examples of the effect of shell-fire, though they had been chiefly overthrown by hand and dynamite in the interests of more civic improvements. A big Western-style park had already been completed at the foot of the hill, and the plan was to include this within it. The most famous old landmark of Canton, much more truly of five stories than a pagoda, was only a wreck of its former self, ready to fall at a heavy shake, and rumors were persistent that it was to be razed also, like so many of the ancient monuments of Canton. Dr. Sun assured us in person that it would be preserved, repaired, and made a part of the new park system; but unless the work goes on apace, which is not likely with political conditions what they have been of late years, the thing will soon fall or blow over of its own decrepitude.

Looking out across compact Canton from Five-Story Pagoda Hill and the last remnant of the city wall the eye caught first the Flowery Pagoda in the back foreground, with the "British yamen" a big blotch of green close beside it, on the sky-line the twin spires of the French cathedral and, farther to the right, past the wireless towers recently erected behind the Bund of the "southern capital," the great department-store down on the busiest part of the river-front, with here and there a pawnbroker's tower, perhaps as far away as Honam. For several years just before our Civil War Canton was held by a British and French garrison, as a result of the second "opium war," and during that time the two nations saw no harm in solidifying their positions there. The French confiscated a group of official buildings from which the occupants had fled and erected the cathedral that, until the recent flurry in department-stores, towered above all else in the city, which was not only bad joss, according to the geomancers, but a typically Gallic bit of arrogance. The British naturally could not do without their share, so they occupied another big cluster of official buildings just across the narrow street from the Flowery Pagoda, which to this day is known as the "British yamen." Standing in the heart of land-hungry Canton, a great green splotch of huge old trees hiding a few half-ruins, yet which no Chinese can enter, it seems at the least out of

date. Nor do the British make any great use of it. Belonging to the foreign office in England but rented to the Hong Kong Government as a lodging for its student interpreters, it is no one's business to keep the place up; and though it is half the size of Shameen, there are only a few habitable rooms, and Hong Kong has to rent other lodgings for some of its young hopefuls, that they may learn the language they so promptly forget after they return to the little colony as "civil servants." For there it is naturally impossible for them to associate with the "natives" even in order to keep up what they have so laboriously and expensively acquired, and the case is not unusual of young Englishmen who have spent two years studying the dialect of Canton and Hong Kong using an interpreter in all their official dealings with the race under them. In fact the then minister of education of Hong Kong, who had learned Cantonese as a student interpreter twenty-five years before, now spoke only pidgin English to his "boy."

Not far from the one called flowery is what is popularly known as the "smooth pagoda." Like a big factory chimney tapering toward the top, it is really the minaret of the little mosque in which some of the Mussulmans of Canton still meet on Friday afternoons. Arab traders seem to have found their way to this great port long before the days of Marco Polo, long indeed before it was really a Chinese city. Outside what used to be the North Gate of Canton, in a cemetery of Chinese Mohammedans, there still stood when we were there—one must be cautious in speaking of anything destructible that is within the power of the southern generals—the large-domed tomb, like those of Damascus, of what is reputed to be a maternal uncle of Mohammed himself, who, Hwei-hwei legend has it, migrated to China soon after the Hegira.

The once famous City of the Dead beyond consists now mainly of coffin-boards built into huts and used as ditch-bridges. The Canton of Sun Yat-sen has little sympathy for the old superstitions. Yet all about the city, among the rice-lands, the orange-, laichee-, and mulberry-groves in which a toiling multitude works from dawn to dark, are scattered burial-places of the dead. Particularly Paak Wan Shan, the big heap of hills east of the city that do not always belie their name as the abiding place of white clouds, is covered high and low, far and wide—hills to blue distance and the surrounding ridges as far as the eye can see—with myriads of the horseshoe-shaped concrete graves of southern China, of all sizes and ranging from gleaming white to weather-blackened, according to the occupant's wealth and date of burial. It is a popular day's excursion, safe enough

ordinarily even for foreign ladies, and coming back one is almost sure to meet a big funeral wailing its winding way through the garden-fields, and certainly a lone pair of gaunt coolies carrying to the lower foot-hills the remains of a child or of a mere soldier in the thinnest of pine coffins.

A unique feature of the Canton landscape and district round about is the pawnbrokers' tower-warehouses that bulk everywhere high above the surrounding buildings. Huge, solid, square blocks of masonry, most of them age-blackened, with tiny windows and even those subdivided by bars, though it is like dissecting a flea, they are a constant reminder of the dangers to property in this region. In times of peril—that is, most of the time nowadays—the wealthy pawn their valuables, less for need of ready cash than for safe-keeping. These places are particularly numerous on the Honam side of the river—which reminds me that Canton may seem smaller than one expected partly because the eye takes in little more than the solid waterfront of that great compact section of it half-way across the Chu-kiang.

Honam ("south of the river") is a large island in the Pearl River, its upper nose an important part of the city of Canton, its lower end at Whangpoa an hour by steamer below. Constant strings of sampans ferry the population back and forth, and the steamers from Hong Kong and elsewhere come and go on the farther side of the island when the tide is low enough to show the two reefs marked with red lighthouses just off Dutch Folly. It is a wonderful river, by the way, not yet fished out for all the crowded population that has fed upon it for so many centuries, so that men fish with nets right off the swarming Bund, like the Frenchmen on the Seine quays of Paris, with the difference that the Cantonese seem now and then to be rewarded for their trouble.

When those five *ma-lu* with which the municipality threatens to cut up our suburb of Saikwan are finished there are to be others in Honam, but meanwhile it is as puzzling a labyrinth of emaciated lanes as you will find in China. Honam makes much matting, or rather, it stencils in fancy colors matting sent in from the country districts, where a simple frame and some bobbins thrown incessantly back and forth across it turn reeds into these Chinese substitutes for mattresses and rugs. Most of the famous "Canton china" comes from Honam also, and that, too, is not really made there, but in Kingteh-chen, home of Chinese porcelain. It comes to Canton in big baskets

"from Kiangsi," as the local workers put it, the province being as far as their geographical knowledge carries. How disturbed the country has been of late is shown by the fact that this unfinished china, which for centuries came overland by river-boats and coolie carriers along an old imperial trail, now goes all the way round through Shanghai and Hong Kong by sea, at of course several times greater cost. Men trot through the streets of Honam, not with "biscuit," but with baskets of once-baked china covered with a white glaze, and there it is painted in the gaudy styles that represent Canton's ideas of decoration. There is grinding of colors here, too, but the blind are not employed at it; probably there is hardly work for all those with full faculties. The kilns in which the colors are baked on are small, and the sweat-shop conditions under which some women and many rather elderly men paint and live in dark and dismal holes would probably disgust even Kingtehchen.

There is an important highway, as southern China understands the word, along Honam Island from its crowded Canton suburb to the Canton Christian College, an establishment, like several other of our mission institutions in China, better off in buildings, equipment, and no doubt personnel than many an American college at home. It is a winding flagstone trail, hardly four feet wide, and in places raised well above the fields, for which the nose is often duly grateful. The fertility of the small but endless gardens of Honam is largely due to hundreds of jarfuls of that which so frequently brings distress to the nostrils in rural China, but here, especially in the morning, even on New Year's day, there was a strong counter-scent of green onions in the air, as great bundles of these, of garlic, of those long-stemmed cabbages widely cultivated by the Chinese came trotting into town on coolie shoulders. The "road" passes close behind the well-guarded cement factory in which the "Generalissimo" had his headquarters and refuge, and under the edge of a small real-estate-boom town of returned Chinese from America, with some imposing-looking houses of American pattern, cement sidewalks, but grass roads between them, and a name suggestive of Bible-reading,—Cherith. The Chinese are tireless in watering their fields, or in doing anything else that will make their crops a little better, and those about Canton are constantly being sprinkled by coolies and peasants who carry all day long from the nearest water-hole two big wooden buckets with long spouts. But it is really the night-soil, even the night-water, on which they chiefly depend. For in China nothing is lost. To fatten the impoverished soil

they conserve carefully every fertilizing particle, so that the earth itself, like the thick air of the narrow city streets, is saturated with the refuse of humanity. Their very religion—which after all is nothing but codified necessity rendered sacred for protection's sake—orders man to give back to the divine earth everything that has come out of it. He cannot without sin fail to return the slightest atom of its substance to the place whence it came. An emperor formulated minute agricultural rites a thousand years before the Christian era; in fact, Moses gave the same orders, purporting to come from his Deity, to his people:

The inspectors of agriculture will see to it that there is not lost or wasted the least molecule, for it is the strength and health of the people. They will have it gathered in vases in which it will ferment during six days, and after that they will use it by placing therewith ten times as much water. For the rice, they will spread it on during the vegetation, and not before, and as many times as is necessary, but not more, for if too much is put on it evaporates in the air. For unflooded lands it will be placed at the foot of plants while they are coming up, for if it were placed between the rows a great deal would be lost. Acting thus with wisdom and economy, little will be spent and there will be obtained abundant harvests, and the people will be happy. In the provinces of the North which produce no harvests during the winter, the surplus of fertilizer will be mixed with earth and made into bricks, which will be transported into the provinces of the South.

Not far behind the Canton Christian College is an old temple among trees on a hill, where a former bartender in America lives as a priest. A man of seventy-five now, he went to California at twenty, worked as house-boy in San Francisco, tended bar in Phoenix, Arizona, and brought back as his chief memory of the United States an insatiable taste for chocolate cake. He keeps Chinese wine, which he offers, in cups that do not speak well of his dish-washing abroad, to all foreigners who drift up to his retreat, meanwhile chattering fluently in terrible English; and his definition of a gentleman is one who takes "only two or three fingers." Upon his return to his native land he gave all his money to the monastery he now inhabits, on condition of being well taken care of until death, properly buried, and joss generously burned to his spirit—but just then the call of "Dinner! Come and get it," sounded in its Cantonese equivalent, and he bade us a hasty *au revoir*.

The story of Honam would be incomplete without mention of its biggest man, Lei Fuk-lum. Some miles still farther out beyond the college by another flagstone trail he has built himself a feudal castle, with moat, drawbridge, loopholes for the rifles of its many defenders,



In Canton and its adjoining districts tower-like pawnshop-warehouses bulking high above other buildings offer protection to valuables in frequent times of danger



Along the waterfront of Canton crowded streets of house-boats stretch for miles



The many vegetable-gardens of Canton suburbs and vicinity are usually watered by a contrivance suited to a land where burdens are divided over the shoulder



Lei Fuk-lum, ex bandit boss of Honam Island, lives in a feudal castle with moat, draw-bridge, and rifle loopholes for his many armed defenders



and all the rest. In his early days Lei Fuk-lum was a bandit who held up many gambling-games and other places of sudden revenue, especially illegal ones, with no other weapon than a small blackened lamp-chimney, wherefore he is known as "Lamp-chimney Lay"—Canton's mispronunciation of the good old Chinese family name Li. Legend has him a kind of Robin Hood, robbing the rich, the gambling-halls, and the like partly to give to the poor. Gradually he came to be the real boss of all Honam Island, with its seventy-two villages and perhaps 300,000 people, was officially made so under the Manchus, and has held it to this day, with the title of general—perhaps marshal by now—under every rival holder of Canton since the revolution. He wears an eye-filling uniform, keeps a crowd of armed ragamuffins close about his person, has a sizable army of his own, and at his yamen, a former temple in the most crowded part of the Honam suburb of Canton, dispenses justice and its antithesis like an old ward-heeler of Tammany in its halcyon days.

From the turreted top of Lei's castle his guards can look far away across flat country, though with hills in both directions, Whangpoa and the two pagodas, some of the river itself, in plain sight. The place is surrounded by a great orange-orchard in which ripe fruit hung heavy on that New Year's day, and the master's orders seem to be to give to any respectable-looking visitors, foreigners included, all the sweet oranges they can eat and carry away. The moat was almost a lake, the great concrete house sitting in the middle of it impregnable to anything but heavy artillery. Flowers bloomed wherever there was space for them; a guest-room well separated from the rest of the house proved that the general took no foolish chances. But the men on guard, with alert eyes and ears rather than with guns, made no protest when we strolled about the very restricted grounds, and even a few of his wives came down to peer at us through the slight shrubbery. Lei follows the convenient Chinese plan of keeping a wife or two wherever he may need one, rather than toting them about with him. So absolutely did he command the island that even the "C.C.C." depends upon him for order and keeps in his good graces.

There is another pleasant walk from the college across the island, though with such wandering among grave-lands and through several villages that the most astute evil spirit could never hope to follow. An occasional childish cry of "*Fang gwai-lo!*"—Cantonese for *yang gwai-tze*, or foreign devil—greet the stroller, with hints that the scamps are being egged on by whispering adults. One comes out

on the further branch of the river, opposite Paak Hok Tung—White Crane Grotto, though I have never seen any of the three there—with other big mission schools and a foreign residence suburb which considers itself the safest of all from stray bullets during the constant civil wars. A small boat largely taken up by the family altar will set one across, unless the wind is too high; and if the legs are still willing not to fall back upon the launch to Shameen, one can wander on along more winding stone roads through green and scented vegetable-gardens and several villages to Fati, with other foreign residences. In fact, if all the foreign communities scattered about Canton, the original home of foreign trade and Protestant missions in China, were gathered together in one town, Shameen, the hub of them all, would indeed be a little island by comparison.

Fati has many flower-gardens, with trees and shrubs bound into those dwarfed and crippled forms into which the Chinese, though less so perhaps than the Japanese, are given to training decorative plants that to the Westerner would be more beautiful in their natural shapes and forms, something akin perhaps to binding the feet. Some of these flowering shrubs are fitted up with painted heads and hands of baked mud to suggest Buddhas or ancient worthies. Here, too, one sees many of those glazed earthenware seats, in rich blue and the like, which the wealthy scatter about their gardens. A little farther on is the station of the shortest of Canton's three railway lines, to Samshui, thirty miles away on the West River, with stations almost every mile, but only two cities, notably Fatshan, the Newark of South China, second in population only to Canton itself, though little known abroad. From the station one of a hundred contending boats, almost certainly manned by women and children, will carry one back across the river above the island that divides it into less dangerous width on those many days when the winds sweep up through the "Macao passage" to the nests of "flower-boats" at the entrance to our creek, with the third railway station near-by. That is the line northward that hopes some day to join the Hankow-Peking at the Yang Tze, and perhaps even have a connecting loop with that from Kowloon, so that our grandchildren may be able to board a train across the harbor from Hong Kong and get out of it at Peking. But much water will probably flow under the old humped stone bridges of China before that day comes—and it will take away some of the charm of China as a half-impassable country.

## CHAPTER X

### CANTON UNDER SUN YAT-SEN

**A**T Canton one felt infinitely farther away from Peking than one does in California from Washington or New York. There was almost no Peking news in the Canton papers, as if the doings of the self-styled capital were of no importance down here, so that it was like being in San Francisco without telegrams, without so much as mention of any place east of the Rockies, and with the first transcontinental railroad still unbuilt across several States of the Middle West. This isolation was partly due to old Chinese provincialism. Canton with her different language, many different customs, a partly different race, has always been far away from the North. Perhaps the greatest single reason to-day for this division is the break of some three hundred miles in the railway that was to have been the Canton-to-Peking line that is so badly needed, not merely economically, but politically and socially, to bring the country together. This isolation, all these differences, were much enhanced now by the defection of Sun Yat-sen and the Kuomintang or People's party; Sun himself would of course have called it the defection of the rest of the country from his "Southern Constitutionalists."

When we first arrived in Canton just before Christmas of 1923 Dr. Sun lived and had his headquarters at the cement works, a big confiscated factory some distance down the river and across from the main city, on Honam Island. It was perhaps the only livable space left solid enough to withstand a mutiny, always possible among the variegated troops he had gathered about him; here he had the protection of "Lamp-chimney Lay," the boss of Honam, and no doubt he felt that China was just then more in need of another kind of cement. Best known to the Chinese by his affectionate school-boy nickname of Sün Wen—the *wen* character being that of *wen-li*, meaning literature—Sun Yat-sen was then commonly called the "Generalissimo," in order to avoid calling him president when he had little or nothing to preside over.

That his is about the only modern Chinese name known the

world over is partly due to what he always frankly called "my overthrow of the Manchus," partly, too, of course, to his lifelong work for the betterment of China, but largely for the three reasons that he lived much abroad, spoke English almost as well as his own tongue, and particularly that the overwhelming majority of the Chinese in foreign parts come from his section of the country, speak his language, have his point of view, and long carried on propaganda for him abroad. The sensational incident of his kidnapping by the Manchu legation in London probably gave him the most publicity of all. It may well be that Dr. Sun was as great a man as his fame abroad suggests, but one did not hear that opinion of him during his last years from many Chinese, and one heard it from no foreign resident of China, least of all in Canton, with the exception of a few who were more or less in his pay or influenced by his undoubtedly winning personality. Certainly one did not get that notion from the extent of territory he governed, and less still from the way it was governed. Dr. Sun made a name for himself throughout the world partly because persons unfamiliar with conditions in China have always associated him and his published statements with the New China that exists in their minds; but there is a world of difference between the China of Dr. Sun's vision and China as it actually is.

Born little more than a coolie in a small village of the Canton delta, in one of those "four districts" from which have come virtually all Chinese immigrants in the Western world, he was set on his way at thirteen by going to Honolulu with an elder brother, who had made so good a start there already that he took a ship-load of his fellow-provincials back with him, and claimed the bounty of \$100 each offered for Chinese immigrants by the King of Hawaii. Later Sün Wen studied under American medical missionaries in Canton, was graduated in medicine at an English college in Hong Kong, practised first in Macao until the Portuguese squeezed him out, then in Canton, where he was considered a good surgeon and an expert in maternity cases, though his real interest even then seems to have been the overthrow of the Manchus. The character he preserved to the last is symbolized by the fact that by forcing the first president of the Chung Hing Hwei or Revolutionary party, which he and other Cantonese formed in Hong Kong, to resign in his favor, he remained its head and center until his death. Between 1895 and 1911 he organized at least three attempts to drive the alien Manchus off the throne of China, the overseas Chinese from his section furnishing virtually all the financial aid. No doubt he did overthrow the Manchus, though he was not even in China, but in the

United States, when the successful revolution broke out at Wuchang, and he did not reach his native land until more than two and a half months later, just in time to be elected at Nanking the first provisional president of the republic.

But his revolutionary days were by no means over, and as long as he lived Sun never was free of more or less violent political agitation. Perhaps it had become a habit. To cut short a familiar story, he soon resumed the struggle for what he considered the independence of the Chinese people by denouncing Yuan Shih-kai, the old-school military bully, who would have founded a new dynasty. In 1913 this resulted in a declaration of independence of Kwangtung Province, home of the "Father of the Republic," which to this day has never been canceled; and the fact that Sun let himself again be elected "president" of the "republic" by his southern faction, when every one knew he could not be so in reality, estranged several of his own best colleagues of the "Southern Constitutional" cause.

There is little doubt that Sun Yat-sen himself was honestly and sincerely patriotic, and for those qualities his name will live. Had he wished, he would have had no difficulty in accumulating a large fortune, yet he seems to have left little of a material nature except his well-thumbed books, his clothing, and a house; and who else among the Chinese officials of to-day is not primarily interested in personal monetary gain? But like so many critics, reformers who can break down, he could not build up. An idealist decades ahead of his slow-moving fellow-countrymen, he saw the faults of the existing system, but he was no practical governor. The work of government is after all a dry, practical business, and for it neither Dr. Sun's early experiences, his temperament, nor his special gifts adequately fitted him. He was too impatient, too impulsive for the steady grind of building up the complicated edifice of a national government. Human passion can be fomented against a dynasty, a nation, or a class much more easily than people, especially an ignorant and illiterate people, can be interested in constructive effort. His whole training was that of an agitator, and it is a mere truism that agitators seldom make good administrators. Dr. Sun himself no doubt felt this, when he stepped down in favor of Yuan Shih-kai; the work to which he was not fitted was forced upon him by the treachery of that plausible fat rascal to Sun's ideals.

Like so many of his kind, Sun surrounded himself with, or let himself be surrounded by, the riffraff not only of his own but of other provinces. He could thrive on his successive fulminations

against the Manchus, Yuan Shih-kai, the capitalists, the foreigners; but when those he was striving to help did not live up to his hopes he became embittered. His own son, graduate of two American universities, and mayor of Canton during his father's last years, has been accused of having a share in the sales of public lands and confiscated private properties for which no satisfactory accounting has ever been rendered. Dr. Sun had many disappointments in his life as a reformer—what reformer has not?—and it was not strange if he turned somewhat cynical. Toward the last he became more of the disappointed visionary obsessed with his own importance, or at least of the importance of the work he thought he had been sent into the world to do; and in devoting his entire life to agitation in his efforts to instil Western democracy into the Far East, he did things sometimes impractical, many times not applicable, and occasionally mischievous. He became vain of his own powers, sensitive to criticism, unable to take advice from any one who did not agree with him, and must himself be the deciding factor in everything. Those of his own people who opposed him were "rebels"; foreigners who did not recognize his sometimes grotesque pretensions were the enemies of China.

But whatever his faults, Sün Wen was for many years a great figure in the life of the Chinese people, and his determination and self-confidence, his extraordinary energy, and his almost ferocious belief in himself and his ideals probably greatly assisted the cause of democracy in China. True, Chinese abroad, disappointed at his continued failures, had begun to cut down supplies, and the Cantonese at home were disgusted with the combined oppression and inefficiency of his administration. It is the irony of fate that in Canton itself, where he exerted himself longest sincerely for the benefit of the people, he will probably be longest remembered for the sale of public lands, the confiscation of private properties for the support of useless politicians and bandit-troops, and the massacre of civilians who opposed the introduction of exorbitant taxation and a Bolshevist reign of terror. If we seek evidence of his greatness in his constructive work, we shall largely seek in vain; but it cannot be denied that Sun Yat-sen gave the Chinese people a new vision and a new faith in themselves, and his teachings will exercise a powerful influence on them for a long time to come.

In personal matters Dr. Sun was the antithesis of most Chinese who rise to high position in a single lifetime. He lived simply,

abstained not only from opium but from wine and tobacco, was always abstemious, craved the outdoor life, and read in the real sense of the word whenever he found time to do so. He described himself as a Christian, but he became estranged even from the missionaries. For one thing he had put aside his old wife and taken a new one. She was as comely and attractive, at least to Western eyes, as the Chinese can be, a young woman of personality, dignified presence, American college education, speaking and writing English almost perfectly, all in all a wife of the type a man in Sun's position needs, which the mother of his three children, wished upon him unseen at the age of eighteen by his family, was not. Moreover it was rather she who had abandoned him, by refusing to follow where his chosen career led him. But this first wife, and from our narrow Western point of view his only legal one, still lived at the old home in Macao, and the missionaries, with whom she was in close touch, charged the husband with immorality. Dr. Sun contended that he had divorced his first wife according to the laws of China, or of Canton—which seems to consist in saying, "I don't want you any more; go live somewhere else." "You have plenty of divorce in your countries and according to the laws thereof," retorted the "Generalissimo," somewhat testy in his ailing last years, to old missionary friends who took him to task; "why have I not the right, even as a Christian, to divorce by the laws of *my* country?" There the matter stood when he died.

The other inseparable companion of Dr. Sun during his last years was a Canadian gentleman of the family name of Cohen, reputed a former luminary of the prize-ring, an erstwhile cowboy of our great West, and a "two-fisted two-gun man" of high speed and large caliber. Rarely during our months in Canton was the "Generalissimo" seen even in semi-public without Mrs. Sun the second at his side and the belligerent, or at least highly protective, face of Mr. Cohen in the immediate background. When we had the honor one Sunday morning to call upon Dr. Sun at his cement factory headquarters and residence, his Canadian shadow, tucked into a corner of the stairway at the entrance to the doctor's study, scrutinized not only me but my wife as if to make sure that she had not come to wreak mischief on his chief. But at least the terror of the Manchus had no one else in the room with him, which was a great change and relief from the mob of guards and servants who mill incessantly about one trying to talk, through an interpreter, to almost any other of the big military-political men of China.

Sun's forte just then was anger at foreigners, with the emphasis on Americans and British in the order named. The reason was the "customs incident," the most outstanding example of correct purpose but wrong methods during our Canton residence. For some time the Government of Sun Yat-sen had been demanding in vain that those portions of the maritime customs receipts collected—by foreigners—within his territory be turned over to him rather than to the putative Central Government of Peking. It was not an unreasonable demand; yet it was one to which the powers could not agree without seriously losing face, however unjust it was that duties which Canton citizens paid on imports and exports should be made to finance wars against them, because those powers still recognized Peking as the Government of China and had no legal relationship with Dr. Sun's Government. Sun threatened to take over the custom-house and its receipts by force; there was even talk, I believe, of making Mr. Cohen commissioner of customs in place of the recalcitrant British incumbent. Such a move would not have been wholly unjustified, but it probably would not have summed up to wisdom, and in that far it was typical of much of Sun's career.

The powers, or at least the little agencies thereof which function and play tennis on Shameen, got excited and brought gunboats up to Canton until the river was full of them, where they lay just far enough out in the stream so that the blue-jackets could not quite jump ashore or aboard—though at least one exhilarated American "gob" tried. How it ever happened no one knows to this day, but for once the Americans were in the majority. The stars and stripes flapped at the sterns of no fewer than six floating ash-cans and similar things stolen from Spain in 1898, and destroyers left over from the late war, while the British had only five much more nearly useful floating contrivances. The French had three or four, the Italians two or three; the Japanese naturally sent several proofs of their equality with any other nation; and even the Portuguese, unless my memory plays me false, salvaged some sort of craft from which to wave their revised flag in the breezes of the Pearl River. What with Sun's own blue-gray tubs flying the sun banner, some of them even able to get up steam, and the ancient cannon many of the old junks carry against pirates, the river looked almost as much like an arsenal as did the soldier-crowded city ashore.

Of course our extra ash-can proved that we were worst of all the "great imperialist powers" that were grinding into the dirt the "Con-





In Canton under Sun Yat-sen coolies were impressed into war service as ruthlessly as the merchants were pillaged and the inhabitants overtaxed



Not merely soldiers but their mules were housed in the famous Chen family temple of Canton and many another place of worship



One had only to push aside a dirty canvas curtain anywhere along the streets of Canton, where mercenary soldiers held the gambling concessions, to find a fan-tan game in full swing



One afternoon we came upon a prisoner, his arms tied behind him, screaming with pain as an official beat him with a heavy club on the head and the more sensitive parts of the body

stitutional Government" of the South, so that the interviews Dr. Sun gave to those who succeeded in catching him unbeknownst to the British-born Chinese head of his aviation and censorship division were to the effect that America was no longer a friend of China, that England—though both his chief propagandist and his body-guard were British—was almost as bad, and that he was going to turn Bolshevik and make an alliance with Russia, repudiate the "unequal" treaties with other foreign countries, take away the concessions and the extraterritorial rights of those who still retained them, refuse to allow foreign powers to limit the Chinese tariffs while piling them on at their own ports against Chinese imports, and correct the rest of the Chinese grievances against the powers. All of which, from the Chinese point of view, one could hardly blame them for doing—if they could. But certainly the poor old idealist, not even able completely to control his own city, was in no position to attempt anything of the sort.

The customs duties of Canton continued to be collected by foreigners at least theoretically appointed by Peking, and such of the funds as did not go to pay their salaries were duly remitted to Peking to pay off foreign debts. The residue might indeed have gone to finance future wars against Sun Yat-sen, if it did not go instead into the personal bank-accounts of the Northern militarists. There was much talk and ill feeling, duly aired through the "Canton Gazette," an English-speaking organ of the "Southern Government"; but gradually the thing blew over; foreign sailors were less often seen playing soccer and baseball on the broad cricket-field of Shameen, or trying to return to their boats without waiting for connecting craft, fewer foreign flags flapped above floating cannon and machine-guns, and the Chu-kiang took on more nearly its normal condition—until the next "crisis" again brought ships rushing up from Hong Kong, the Philippines, Nagasaki, Indo-China, Macao, and elsewhere.

Sun Yat-sen himself surely came to realize that no one can govern without territory. The notion is wide-spread abroad that the contending factions of northern and southern China divide the country about equally between them. In reality the authority of the "Southern Government" at Canton extended little farther, except now and then sporadically, than the delta of its rivers; and even there, in the very city of Canton itself, it was more or less curtailed by ungovernable mercenary troops, by pirates, by rival generals from this and other provinces. Sun's position in his last years was much as if Jeff Davis

had intrenched himself at New Orleans and hung on until his death to a slice of Louisiana, intriguing now and then with the various factions of a divided North, occasionally plunging over into Mississippi, but in the main by no means governing even the whole of Louisiana.

I hold no brief for or against the late "constitutional president of China," and my interest in politics is not as a chess-game with human knights and pawns but only in so far as it affects the lives of the governed masses. But I have been in every province of China and many countries of the globe, and I know none leading a more miserable life than Canton under Sun Yat-sen and his lieutenants during his last years. The Canton we knew was probably the most misgoverned city in China, if not in the world. How much this was due to Dr. Sun is a question I shall make no attempt to answer beyond setting down some of the details of the misrule that were forced upon our attention.

To begin with a sensitive spot in all human societies, the Cantonese during the last years of Sun Yat-sen were almost certainly the most heavily taxed people on earth. Our own politicians are mere amateurs at taxation compared to the "Generalissimo" and his satellites. I should be afraid to give a complete list of his taxes, even if I possessed one and felt justified in besmirching a hundred pages or more with it, for fear, like Marco Polo, of not being believed. But a few outstanding details may be justifiable.

All forms of transportation were subject to at least a 20 per cent increase in fares, to be collected through the carrier, so that your ticket in the jolting buses to Tung Shan cost thirty-six cents, though the mere fare of thirty was already higher than anywhere in rich America. We growled at an 8 per cent tax on railroad tickets until it was repealed; the tax on railway fares out of Canton was 46. Railway and motor-car riding, hotel living, electric light, and running water were all rated luxuries and taxed accordingly, none at less than 20 per cent. That amount was added to the cost of all hotel rooms—except of course on Shameen—and later this was doubled because two rival generals each claimed the tax and came daily to collect it. There was a similar tax on rickshaw riding and even on "ferry-boats"; that is, the miserable old sampans which charge five "cash" or less a passenger to cross that part of the Chu-kiang between the Bund and the island portion of Canton. The more than fifty thousand boats and junks on river and canals were forced to pay a business-tax like

the shops on shore. There was a tax of 30 per cent on money collected by priests, in addition to a license-tax on each of them of \$30 a year. The official gazette reported that the restaurant-tax was yielding a million annually; though Canton is not a city of soda-fountains, the tax on soda-water was expected to yield fifteen thousand; a house-tax collected by the police amounted to seven hundred thousand; all Cantonese possessing arms, and badly in need of them, were forced to take out permits at high fees. There were heavy charges on every stage of transferring real property. It was taxed for registering, certifying, stamping, and filing the deed; there was a tax for the building-permit, for improvement of property, a stamp-duty on every document, a police-tax of 7 per cent on the rental, a sanitary tax—though each street had seen to its own sanitation with far more success before the modern form of municipal government was introduced in 1918—a tax on investments, on buying lots for building, on boasting that one owned property, for all I know. Yet the land speculator got off easily compared to the man raising hogs for market, who had at least fifteen kinds of taxes to pay. The levying of exorbitant production and export taxes almost resulted in the paralysis of the silk-trade, chief of Canton's industries, and left thousands of bales of raw silk piled up in the warehouses because the banks refused further advances to the filatures. Allied with this was the requirement of a permit and a high percentage on the amount for taking more than fifty dollars "small money" out of the port of Canton, for the silk-merchants have to transfer millions in actual silver to the silk-producing districts. Perhaps fire-wood held the record for taxation; there were more than fifty forms of *likin* and tribute to troops and bandits between the woods and the market, so that a *picul* of fire-wood at thirty cents on the hillside sold for \$2.50 in Canton; another heavy tax led to its virtual withdrawal from the market until Sun and his crowd receded. Miscellaneous taxes included fees for permission to play "sparrow," as the official gazette more or less properly translated mah jongg—at the same time there were heavy fines for playing it in lodging-houses—for advertising with circulars or sign-boards in the streets, for numbering sedan-chairs, for displaying shop-signs. A military officer tried to tax each boat of night-soil, but that was too much even for the Chinese, and for a time houses were not relieved of their nightly accumulations. Later the military found a way to get a "rake-off" even from these sewage-boats. Manufacturers of matches protested in vain against a new war-tax on their

product, saying that the duties on imported raw materials already made profit impossible—but here my sympathy ceases, for I have little compassion with Chinese match-makers, in either sense of the word. I saw without regret almost all match-factories throughout the country closed by military overtaxation or pure confiscation, for if one in fifteen Chinese matches, symbolical in their fragility of the unwisdom of deforestation, lights even in a sheltered place, still another miracle may be recorded.

The favorite plan of the Canton Government and its parasites was to give the monopoly on anything taxable to the highest bidders, so that in addition to the estimated yield of every tax the people were forced to pay often high profits to the syndicate to which it was farmed out. Thus there appeared almost daily even in the English-speaking government organ such bits as :

The Koo Chi Company has offered the sum of \$800 monthly for the monopoly of the prostitution revenues of Kongmoon, proceeds of which will go to the Provincial Education Department. Bids are asked for the prostitution rights of Kotung.

Reformers of the West will no doubt be horrified at the thought of such revenues going for such a purpose. But after all is not education logically the first step upward from prostitution? Besides, there were few cases of truth in the often published statements that the taxes on this and several other vices went to support the schools, for while the "Generalissimo" often issued decrees that they should, the military usually got there first.

The sale of opium was also farmed out to a syndicate with a monopoly upon a guarantee of a fixed income to the Government of Dr. Sun, so that the official gazette had to report such items as "Yang Wai-bum will become director of a bureau for the regulation of opium traffic"; for "regulation" read "highest possible sales." Early in the century opium had been almost stamped out under the Manchus, of such nefarious memory in Sun's eyes, fan-tan had been prohibited, and there was an enormous parade of thanksgiving in Canton itself, with a mighty bonfire of opium-smoking and gambling paraphernalia. As late as 1920 men were shot in Canton for gambling or for dealing in or smoking opium. Now under the great idealist reformer who, by his own admission, overthrew them there were gambling, opium, and prostitution "joints" without number, wide open everywhere, for the enriching of

government rascals and the realizing of large sums for mercenary troops overrunning the district. One had only to push aside a dirty once-white canvas curtain almost anywhere, even along the Bund, to find a fan-tan game in full swing. Not only in the streets of Canton but wherever else these bandit-troops of the South dominated, opium-dens, gambling-halls, and bawdy-houses were openly conducted by or under the auspices of the militarists. Troop-protected gambling in Canton included lotteries of every description, taking stakes from a copper up to any amount, thus tempting not only the well to do but even women and children of the poorest class. Some troop-stations went so far as to put up advertising-signs of colored boards and paper lanterns declaring that all patrons would be well guarded while "conversing" inside. Wherever one saw an unusually bright light by night, anywhere in the province or in the adjoining one on the west, it was almost certain to mark a stand-up gambling-place, and there were many more elaborate ones in which the wealthier gambled down from the upper story, as at Macao. One wonders if games of chance thrive best in hot climates, for if fan-tan has its innumerable devotees everywhere in China, it was most constantly in evidence in the South. I recall that many of the several hundred young lieutenants from our own South with whom I went to France in 1917 spent most of the voyage in the attitude of upturned chairs, shouting at their crap-games. At least the stand-up gambling of the Chinese coolies was more dignified. But in one way it was worse than our Wall Street gambling, for it kept thousands of coolies from useful work, whereas it would probably be impossible to make a Wall Street gambler do anything useful. On the other hand, these little white buttons or shining brass "cash" incessantly counted off in fours were not wheat-futures taking bread from hungry mouths, nor were the sums risked gigantic.

Bad as were the taxes, however, they were mild compared to the forced loans and confiscations that made life a constant terror to any one with anything in the region held by Dr. Sun and his mercenary troops. The taking of private property without compensation for the making of wide streets, new parks, and the like was barely the beginning. While Canton had succeeded in thwarting a non-Cantonese army invasion in 1921, it failed to escape the evils and calamities following, from the fact that, not being able to get men enough from his own slight territory, Sun had called in "foreign" troops from neighboring provinces, many of them former bandits, some in whole companies, and

they had taken charge of things to such an extent that the "Generalissimo" was really not ruler even in his own capital. To satisfy these insatiable invaders new schemes had daily to be concocted. These extraordinary measures for raising the wind included the confiscation of all Chinese religious properties, the indiscriminate sale of public lands and buildings, and forced contributions from every one capable of contributing. Other countries have put on heavy taxes and some have confiscated religious establishments; it remained for the Sun Government frankly to confiscate private property.

This began gradually, as such things do. At the beginning of the struggle the General Headquarters of Dr. Sun required a special war contribution from every district government, in sums varying from \$1000 to \$40,000. It was not unusual for word to go out from the same source calling upon the general chamber of commerce to raise half a million among the many trade-guilds of the city; in the latter part of the Sun reign such demands went out two or three times a week. The nine great charitable associations were also asked for half a million; now and again the 350 native banks of Canton were told that they must "lend" him so many hundred thousand dollars by the following night. When this grew chronic the bankers declared that they were already paying fifty thousand a year in *likin*, and they suspended business as a protest against a requirement of the use of stamped paper, particularly because the syndicate to which this tax was farmed at a large margin of profit demanded the privilege of investigating the affairs of the native banks in order to enforce the rule—which of course meant business secrets lost. The Canton branch of the Bank of China was forced into liquidation and its assets were taken over "to cover the Government's claim," in spite of the claims of local depositors and creditors. Under the pretext of land-classification and the examination of deeds thousands of private sites and buildings were confiscated. There were of course many squatters, but far more families had held their property legally for many generations. By subjecting everything to inspection and registration, and requiring heavy fees for every act, hundreds of millions were extorted from the Cantonese during the last two years of Sun. All old titles were declared void, and heavy payments and much trouble were necessary to get new ones; and in the end the owner might find all rents confiscated for the war-chest or by the mercenary troops. There were veritable inquisitions to determine the titles to land. Owners were suddenly summoned to some municipal department, and if their deeds were not verified within a few days they



were dispossessed. Thousands of properties were sold, amid much abuse and corruption; and many others were still awaiting buyers because purchasers could not be sure that they, too, would not soon be driven out. For the fourth time in ten months landlords were ordered during our stay in Canton to hand over two months' rent to the Government, and those living in their own houses to pay one per cent of the value of the property. Next came a special war-assessment of four dollars on every thousand of value in new buildings; then a two per cent capital levy on all businesses in Canton and its districts. Canton residents offered to pay another three per cent tax to exempt their properties from further inquisition and gradual confiscation. The offer was accepted, but the confiscations of private property, either for money direct or to house troops, went on as before.

During the last two years of Sun Yat-sen, with the city under his son as mayor and some score of districts of Kwangtung dominated by mercenary troops from other provinces, the people of Canton constantly saw officials intriguing for offices of profit and militarists fighting for territories in which to commandeer new revenues, impose new taxes, and exact "protection" fees from shipping, gambling, opium, and other traffics illegal and otherwise. It is not strange that with life far more burdensome than it had ever been under the Manchus the people had almost all turned against the man who had promised so much improvement from their overthrow. Even if a man owning property had been friendly to the cause of Sun in the beginning he was gradually made hostile, and there was a general more or less surreptitious exodus of the wealthy. The nationals of the fourteen favored nations were of course hit only indirectly, though often and sometimes seriously at that, while non-extraterritorial foreigners were as badly off as the Chinese. There was a whole series of confiscatory taxes on the so-called dancing-halls conducted by Russian women, not a few of which, patronized mainly by sailors from foreign gunboats in the harbor, had grown up in Canton.

Amusing means were tried to save property from confiscation. I have already mentioned the Italian flag on the paper automobile that was to be burned for the use of a dead man, lest there be confiscating Suns in the next world also. The flags of many nations, that of Japan perhaps most conspicuous, but not a few of our own—the stars usually few in proportion to the stripes—warned looters off many properties. Here and there signs informed all who could read English or Chinese that "This property is mortgaged by —, British merchants";

who may have been Parsees, Hindus, Hong Kong Chinese, or what not. Over on Honam Island we came upon perhaps the most naïve attempt of all to get this precious foreign protection. Beside a little lot and hut a piece of board nailed to a tree solemnly announced :

This land is belong of America.  
Anybody cant to be trouble.

Nor, quite aside from financial matters, was the ideal government of Sun Yat-sen giving a happy, fearless life to the rank and file of whom he always posed as the spokesman and sponsor. Just because a man had nothing was no reason to conclude that he was safe. One of the specialties of the Sun rule was the impressing of coolies, the grabbing of a man anywhere, on the streets or in his own home, in order to force him into military transport or other service, often hurrying him away without even time to tell his family. Men were stolen quite as ruthlessly as the merchants and bankers were pillaged and the inhabitants taxed and officially robbed. It was a common sight to pass a hundred coolies lined up to be enrolled as unpaid carriers for lazy soldiers, if not to be sent to the front as "volunteer" companies. Naturally, needy politicians and military men found the threat of kidnapping or pressing into service a strong lever against those who still had money or anything else of value. Even the fair sex—unless that term is misleading in China—were not free from compulsion. It was not hard to guess the fate in store for those mentioned in another article that appeared one day in the official paper :

#### GIRLS FOR DISPOSAL

In the Reformatory of the Police Department there are several young girls of marriageable age [here followed seven names, with dates and places of birth, none of the latter Canton and the former ranging from fifteen to twenty]. Those who are looking for mates will do well to take note.

We had a hint one day of something still more symbolical of the Sun Government in its last years, and of what lay beneath the much-English-speaking and Western-copied commission form of municipal rule of which Canton boasted. My wife and I were strolling one afternoon along that northern part of the razed wall farthest from the Bund where no boulevard had as yet been completed when we heard sounds of heavy blows punctuated by wailing and shrieks of pain. I went forward alone and found a man apparently of the small-merchant class with his wrists tied tightly together behind his back and the long rope attached to them in the hands of a fairly high city official. While he

yanked the rope, with great pain to the prisoner, the bully was beating his victim as rapidly as his right arm could function over the bare shaven head, on the protruding knee- and ankle-bones, on the elbows, and wherever else is most painful, with a hardwood stick of stove-wood length, a dozen grinning soldiers, evidently there to protect the fellow from his trussed victim, and a few of the braver populace enjoying the scene from the side-lines. The foreigner can still do many things in China that the Chinese themselves would never dare do, and hoping that it might perhaps put an end to the torture, I drew out my kodak. The bully ceased his beating and laughed, "Ah, the foreigner is taking a picture of us!" Then he orated for some time, either in an effort to justify himself or to recount the man's crime, but as he spoke in the Cantonese dialect I got little of it. Meanwhile the prisoner half sat on the ground in a kind of coma. He was distinctly not of the criminal class, and his crime may have been nothing worse than inability to contribute further to the war-chest of the soldiery. Perhaps it was the old Chinese story of making a man confess, whether he was guilty or not, before he could be "legally" executed. As I closed the kodak the official sent a soldier with his card and a request for a copy of the picture; then he went on beating his victim, whose screams of pain resounded until we were out of hearing. I mentioned this scene, offering to supply a picture of it, in the mayor's office later, and received the languid reply, from the graduate of an American university, "Ah—er—well, it's strictly against the law." That the Chinese forms of the third degree were inflicted even on women was brought out a few days later by the misuse at police headquarters of one who proved to be the wife of an American citizen.

On the execution-ground of Canton, where in the good old Manchu days the hardier type of tourists used to come to see pirates and the like beheaded with huge swords, prisoners were now generally shot, occasionally bayoneted to death. Executions in southern China are brutal affairs. The condemned man, sometimes after hobbling out to a graveyard with shackled feet, arms tied tightly behind him, kneels while the mob of spectators closes in and soldiers quarrel or gamble for the chance of earning the twenty cents silver usually paid for doing the job. The uniformed rowdy who wins grins broadly at his luck, even though the victim may be a former "bunkie," and stepping close up behind the prisoner shoots him in the back, often blowing a hole six inches in diameter in front. Unless the soldiers themselves demand the spoils, beggars rush up and fight for the trousers—the jacket or

shirt, if there were any, having been ruined—and if no relatives come to take the body away it is often left lying where it fell until removal is imperative. Usually, say foreign residents, it is the wrong man, which according to Chinese jurisprudence does not greatly matter. Yet there are even foreigners who contend that extraterritoriality should be abandoned and all of us made subject to this type of “law.”

The main reason for the incredible taxes, for the farming out of monopolies on the vices that were rarer under the Manchus whom Sun boasted of having chased out, for confiscations and official robberies, was the need, the absolute necessity for money to keep in his pay mercenary troops, mainly from Yünnan and Hunan, in order to hold his territory against his rivals; in other words, the “great reformer” had descended to the level of the scrambling Tuchuns and worse who are the chief curse of China. Now and again we came upon Cantonese officers trying to drill a company of Yünnanese or other mandarin-speaking troops, the men gazing up and down the line to see if any one understood. We talked much more easily with these men in red cap-bands from the southwest than could the people of Canton. Most of the mercenary troops had their own officers and units and ran themselves, and as Sun failed to find new ways of getting money for them these invited invaders took more and more of the older and more natural sources of revenue, until Sun’s own crowd had to turn to means which perhaps never before in the history of tyranny had been afflicted upon an ostensibly friendly people. Hence it was that in the last year every tax-rate had been doubled, and often quadrupled, besides the imposition of hundreds of new imposts. The North River district clear to the end of the railroad line northward had been conquered territory of the Yünnanese for a year or more. They not only controlled the railway, commandeering 40 per cent of its daily receipts, but the towns and cities along it. Fatshan, the big city just a step by train or boat out of Canton, was one of the many spoils of war of these troops ostensibly fighting for Sun, and there they collected all possible taxes, levied all possible graft, and used all the confiscatory tricks in vogue in the larger city. They controlled the Samshui line also, and took all the receipts, allowing a small sum for maintenance and operating expenses. The Kwangtung provincial commissioner still had about fifteen *likin* stations in his control, but the proceeds were often seized by “foreign” troops before they reached Canton. Moreover, the Yünnanese controlled not only the *likin* stations but nearly all the fixed revenues in the city

of Canton itself, leaving to their putative commander and his immediate followers little choice than to think up new forms of revenue or give up their fight to keep even nominal control of the district. That the people of Canton loved least of all these outside oppressors speaking another language, and looked forward to the day when they might hunt them down by their speech and slay them, goes without saying.

Naturally the soldiers practised all kinds of individual grafts and coercions on the population, so that the town was almost in the absolute power of these ragged, lazy, destructive bums and ex-bandits, who were quartered in almost every temple, in confiscated factories, commandeered houses, in anything without foreign protection that was capable of holding a few of them. Almost any day one could find the entrance to a military headquarters in some confiscated building along the Bund or elsewhere decorated with flags, streamers, flowers, with many colors and much pomp of naked bayonets and cocked automatics, evidently about as much to the taste of the population that was forced to pay for all this as are the high-hatted ceremonies of our own politicians blocking legitimate traffic. Chinese soldiers are bad enough anywhere, but I would much rather take my chances with those of the North than with these unsoaped, childish, yet often vicious and debauched, bullies of the South, who strutted the streets of Canton, often with powerful modern weapons. They not merely saw to it that gambling, opium-smoking, and prostitution flourished for their financial benefit, but they patronized all such vices themselves to the extent of their money or bullying. There was next to no drilling, discipline, or fixed duties—little to do but keep up their grafts; many of the officers, however abstemious Sun himself and some of his immediate entourage may have been, gave their time mainly to these same dissipations. Your Chinese is not a bad fellow while he is having a hard row to hoe, but from coolie to Tuchun he is prone to go to pieces under prosperity. The "Generalissimo" wanted to send all soldiers not needed for policing the city to White Cloud Mountain, where he proposed to build them barracks, but with one voice they had declined to go.

The local as well as the "foreign" troops were constantly making trouble. At the lunar New Year, debt-paying time in all China, the Cantonese soldiers were paid in the worthless paper money that the Sun faction issued. When they tried to use this in the shops the keepers refused it. Two or three were shot by soldiers, whereupon the people retaliated. In the end the merchants were forced to take a pro-rata amount of the barren issue, from \$1000 to \$5000, each according to

the volume of his business. Soldiers crowded out of town descended upon the country-side, occupying the village temples and houses. If the people vacated, there was no getting the soldiers out again. They even entered and lived with the family, though the house was already full, so that many women had to be sent away to neighboring villages.

In an effort to combat such trouble there was organized the merchants' militia. Made up mainly of clerks taking turns at this service, the members were dressed in bright new khaki that was a great contrast to the dirty gray-blue of the tramp-like Chinese soldier, were well equipped, and soon gave evidence of discipline befitting their better class. Sun showed his resentment at this unauthorized body, however, and after his Government had accepted from it the duty on some thirty thousand dollars' worth of arms and ammunition the entire shipment was seized down at Whangpoa on the way up the river. But if nothing else was gained by Sun's career in Canton it taught the people to join together for mutual protection more than in the past. Leagues of villages, armed and ready to come to the rescue of one another, took the place of time-honored inter-village battles. By the time we left China the various Merchants' Volunteer Corps of Kwangtung Province were united into a single compact organization, with 100,000 armed men under call, the merchants realizing at last that self-defense was the only protection they could depend upon.

During the time we lived in Canton, and long before and after for that matter, a guerrilla warfare was more or less continuously carried on between the Sun Yat-sen party and, not the great recalcitrant, "un-constitutional" North, but several of his fellow-Southerners, most conspicuous among them Chen Chiung-ming, formerly one of Sun's chief lieutenants, whom he had estranged by his myself-or-no-one ways. With headquarters at Swatow, Chen held the east and some of the south of the province, and though he seemed to take money from the North—that is, just then, Wu Pei-fu—as well as from the territory in his hands, and was reputed already to have two million dollars in Japan and one in Hong Kong, he was probably waiting for the highest bidder. In theory there was always fighting between the two former pals and their equally obnoxious followings on what they grandly called the "eastern front," which oscillated about Sheklung, some fifty miles from Canton down the long since disrupted Hong Kong-Canton railway. Out at Kwangchowfu Station, beyond the former red-light tenements at the eastern end of the Bund, one could often find the platform crowded with more or less armed and accoutred soldiers waiting to entrain for

the "front." Civilians could hardly use the railroad any more, though foreigners who insisted might get to Sheklung on military trains, and possibly break through the "lines" and continue a few days later by rail into British territory. Once in a while there were even a few wounded at the station, though for the most part the fighting seemed to be on the good old principles set forth by two famous Chinese generals of the fifth century B.C.—ancestors perhaps of the chief leaders just then of the North and South, for they were also named Sun and Wu respectively—who preached, and, what is far more to the point, practised, that "the supreme art of war is to subdue the enemy without fighting." I met a foreigner who had seen a "big battle" on the "eastern front" the year before. Considerable ammunition had been wantonly squandered when, about five in the afternoon, a white flag went up on both sides and all stopped for one of the two daily meals of the Canton region, after which the "battle" was renewed again, until a shower sent all scurrying for shelter and the kindly night settled down to avert any accidental bloodshed. The game was rather to intrigue for ways of getting income from the helpless civil population by the sundry bands of mercenary troops, none of whom naturally risked their precious hides unnecessarily.

A year or two before our arrival in Canton the Sun Government—this time perhaps taking its cue from France—had declared that all temple and monastery properties belonged to the Government. Nearly all of them had been seized and a great many torn down, some to give room to *ma-lu*; others were marked for destruction, but were "temporarily" used as soldiers' barracks. Some of the temples were for sale. There were no deeds, but the Government promised to give new ones to purchasers—who no doubt would find them useful as spalls with which to light their water-pipes when another Government came along. So there were few buyers, and the best plan was to tear them down and use the materials and the space for something else. There is something to be said for such destruction of many musty old superstition rendezvous, as for some others of the Sun reforms, but it was one of the chief causes for the dislike for the "great reformer" that ended in his virtual expulsion from Canton.

In the Chen family temple not far from our home in the western suburb, one of the most famous in China, a really magnificent place of its kind, with genuine works of art in the best Chinese style, recently completely renovated, not only soldiers but their mules were quartered.

Artistic old marble balustrades served as clothes-lines; the gambling, loafing inmates hardly respected even the inner sanctum of the ancient family, where hundreds of "spirit tablets" bearing the posthumous names of former members of the clan rose in close serried ranks from floor to ceiling the whole length of this inmost of the several costly buildings. The public was excluded from this, as from almost all the other temples still standing, and even when permission was to be had soldiers often lying about in indecent postures made it impossible for both of us to take advantage of it. But a foreigner could usually get in, with a smile or with his chin thrust out, for Chinese soldiers are simple souls not long since naïve coolies who are merely suffering from too much power and from the bad companionship of one another.

Of many famous old Canton temples already gone or going we were in time to see the tearing down of that of the Five Hundred Genii, as foreigners usually call these homes of the many disciples of Buddha to be found in most large Chinese cities. This one was founded in 503 A.D. and was one of the wealthiest in the "southern capital," where much money was formerly spent by the rich in certain ceremonies. The dismantling had not yet reached the big ill-lighted room with its long rows of the five hundred seated life-size statues, whose features, expressions, and postures, seeming to depict all human qualities, may be worth hours of observation. As usual one of them was known to the Chinese as Marco Polo, though his gilded face was little less Mongol than the others, as if the artists had not had initiative enough to indicate, otherwise than by more hair on the face, the features of a "foreign devil." The seven-story pagoda of white marble presented by Ch'ien Lung was still intact inside another of the buildings, though filthy with the rags of the Yünnanese soldiers, likewise unclean but friendly and at times jovial, especially as our mandarin was their speech also. Nearly all the rest of the great establishment was in full course of destruction. Laughing men were tumbling over the huge iron-heavy pillars, probably of teak; women as well as men were carrying out the blue-black bricks. One old priest wandered disconsolately about the place like an old bird that sees its nest destroyed by some ruthless boy. Hall after hall fell under the picks and crowbars. An old man at the main doorway of the débris-piled square jotted down with a camel's-hair brush in a tissue-paper note-book what seemed to be an inventory of the materials as they were carried out, each carrier handing him a slip of paper with some hastily scrawled characters on it, evidently some complicated form of keeping track of their earnings. A group of men about the doorway and several still better dressed in an improvised office just inside it had



the general air of our political-office bosses enjoying their sinecures over those who were doing the actual work. It seemed strange that where people are still so largely superstitious there appeared to be no trouble in getting plenty of workmen to demolish and carry off this once powerful joss-house. No doubt they had no choice in the matter; we noticed that there were plenty of soldiers about to make sure that no one stopped working; besides, Sun had already defied so many gods and evil spirits that even the common people may have begun to lose their belief in the dangers of flouting them.

Sun reclaimed much land about Canton by having many graves dug up, for which he cannot be blamed in principle even though his methods were crude and ruthless here also. His defense would no doubt be that life is so short and Chinese ways so dilatory that little can be accomplished by other methods. Where grave-lands were reclaimed the bones were placed in a prescribed way in earthenware jars and most of them carried away as a filial duty, but some were still lying uncared for, the line perhaps having died out for all the precautions the Chinese take against that catastrophe. A company that was really a thin veil for the "Southern Government" itself decided to seize the ground in and about an American mission school along the railway northward. The villagers were notified that the company would pay three dollars a grave and that they must begin digging at once. Many of the country people came for their dead without delay. The coffins were opened and the bones laid out on the lids, heads to the west. One of the deceased still wore his hair; another had shreds of flesh on his bones; dogs ran about under the foreign ladies' windows dragging a thigh-bone or a rib; hens walked daintily over the bones, pecking according to their fancy. Men wandered about as if in the throes of mental arithmetic or at a county fair murmuring, "This is my wife; that is my grandmother." One old lady was crying because, of the three dollars allowed her, she had to pay a coolie two for disinterring her husband and eighty cents for a jar, the twenty cents left being insufficient to carry him somewhere else. Those were sad times in the region, for the Chinese of the old school are much more worried over the treatment of their dead than of their living. But among the many good and bad things which Sun Yat-sen did this may best be entered on the credit side, for now that the old rule of leveling them whenever a new Son of Heaven ascended the imperial throne at Peking is naturally no longer in vogue, China needs a new way to get rid of her graves, and unless something radical is done about them that ancient land will be nothing but one vast graveyard.

## CHAPTER XI

### POLITICS AND SOLDIERY

**M**UCH ink has been spread of late in heralding the fear that China will turn to Bolshevism and join the union of Soviet republics. No doubt other forms of propaganda than the recent appointment by Russia of the first ambassador ever sent to China, by virtue of his rank the dean of the Peking diplomats, though many of them cannot yet officially recognize his existence, are spreading through China from the general direction of Moscow. But two years of constant wandering in China and persistent contact with its masses leave me cold to the suggestion that even the notorious bottomless sack of gold available to "Red" agents could soon corrupt, or even noticeably influence, that plodding, industrious, socially stable people. The Celestial temperament does not function so rapidly, or make such complete changes. It is hard to visualize an overwhelmingly peasant population, at least three fourths of which gets its living from labor directly connected with the soil, particularly a nation of strong family and clan cohesion, suddenly adopting communism. For one thing the great mass of the Chinese cannot read, propaganda or anything else. It is true that they can hear acutely, for illiteracy is no evidence of lack of intelligence, but they are suspicious of anything from a foreign source; the great peasant mass that packs itself together in hundreds of thousands of small villages on the stony or infertile edges of precious arable land lives in supreme indifference to what goes on outside its own village, mainly for the obvious reason that the daily struggle for existence is as intense as anywhere on earth; the masses are interested in political discussion and speculation only in so far as it increases the contents of their rice-bowls, and Moscow has little favorable evidence to introduce on this point.

Some races, bedeviled as the Chinese masses have been of late, might conceivably throw themselves into a new philosophy of life with the despairing cry, "Nothing could be worse than this!" The most excitable members of the more or less nebulous "Young China" party have al-



Feng Yü-hsiang, China's "Christian General," whom some regard as her chief hope and others suspect of the same personal ambitions as his many rivals in military dictatorship



Whatever else may be said of Marshal Feng, no one questions the up-to-date methods of his training of officers or the excellent discipline of his men



Venerable old age is held in high honor in China, but it is not usual for mere coolies to reach it



There are not only too many armies in China but too many peanut heads among the simple armed rowdies in uniform who constitute most of the "soldiers,"

ready done so, in the wake of such disillusioned and embittered idealists as Sun Yat-sen. But I am sure that almost any Westerner who knows the Chinese people in any but their most superficial aspects would be astounded to see any great number of them converted to communism and Bolshevism, at least during the lifetime of any infant already arrived in this vale of tears; and by the time those of us who now encumber the earth are gone a score of other isms may have won the floor and demanded a hearing. More power to any of them that will bring improvements in the manifest imperfections of human society as at present constituted. Taken as a whole the people of China have little in common with the scheme of life on which Bolshevism is built. For that matter, of course, neither have the Russian people as a whole, and it is within the range of possibilities that in China, as in Russia, a minority group of extremists may seize the reins of power; but there are other developments that seem more likely.

There has been much provocation for young idealists like Sun Yat-sen—for he remained young in his sincere desire to help his people to his death—to throw themselves into the arms of Bolshevism, and not a little of it has come from our “capitalistic” West. There had come a very natural division in the Kuomintang, the People’s party of the “Southern Constitutionalists,” during the last years of Dr. Sun’s reign. Not merely had those members who had failed to enrich themselves either through political persecution of helpless individuals or by military extortion from the public enlisted in the Bolshevik ranks in order to fatten on the liberal subsidies from outside sources, but others making a serious study of China’s relations with the outside world had come to the conclusion that the best way for China to proceed is in the direction of Soviet principles, to embrace communism, scrap religion, break up the family system, abrogate by force all “unequal” treaties, and bring about a general condition of anarchy and political disorder in the hope that the final effect would be the bankrupting of foreign institutions in China and forcing them out of the way. But though “Young China” rants a little and philosophizes a great deal, it has an inner foundation of hard, unemotional common sense, a practical gift from its history and its ancestors, that will probably convince even the most impatient that Bolshevism is barren of fruit and that it is better to cling to a saner if slower order of progress. After the excitements of the moment are over the Chinese has sense enough to know that though there are times when revolution may be the only way out, it is always better to try to rearrange the home that already exists than to smash

it and try to build an entirely new one that you may not like any better when it is done.

Though a socialist, Dr. Sun was really not at heart a Bolshevik, insist those who knew him best. He was an admirer of Lenin and a friend of the "People's Government" of Russia from the start, but he was too wise a man sincerely to believe that China would benefit by communism. Happy greetings did now and then pass between the "Generalissimo" and Lenin, Trotsky & Co., and occasionally a proclamation against the "great imperialistic nations" went out from the cement works over Sun's signature. One Sunday morning shortly after Lenin died there was a service in honor of him and "the Chinese Bolsheviks who died as martyrs to their cause," whoever they were. Evidently they had existed, for there were large pictures of them along the wall at the back of the stage in the elaborate pavilion of reed mats that had been erected for such gatherings in the new park of Canton. But few believe that Sun Yat-sen died a true convert to Bolshevism; rather that he turned toward it questioningly or in more or less justifiable pique at the way the "imperialistic nations" and many of his own people treated him. What Dr. Sun really had in mind was to save his people from foreign exploitation. Realizing that large industry in China today is chiefly in the hands of foreigners, mainly because the Chinese themselves are inexperienced in industrial coöperation on a large scale, he wished to mobilize the resources of the nation in time to ward off foreign economic aggression that would eventually have made the conquest of China as complete as with rifles and machine-guns, until such time as the Chinese themselves could learn to exploit their own resources. In his purpose, as usual, he was right; it was only in his actions, his results if any, that he fell down. Every honest friend of China would rather her great hidden resources remain forever hidden than see them exploited by foreigners for their own benefit; and it would be just about as bad if, paralleling a leaf in our own American note-book, they were exploited by a few of the Chinese themselves, even though they bequeathed their despoiled fellow-citizens libraries and hospitals afterward.

His friends contend that Dr. Sun's pretended conversion to Bolshevism was merely a means of sparring for time until the Chinese people should realize their own birthright, and perhaps come through communism to share it. Since the Chinese can do little economically except as individuals, or at most as families, because they do not trust one another sufficiently to form effective partnerships and corporations, since, while there are rich men and wealthy families in China, and the

country as a whole is by no means poverty-stricken, whatever the condition of the great masses of the population, there are hardly available among the Chinese themselves those vast sums which modern "industrialism" and effective exploitation require, it goes almost without saying that the making over of the country into the Western industrial image at present would be largely financed by foreigners, to whom of course would accrue the chief rewards. The foreign business community of China would naturally deny the statement if it were brought to its attention, yet I am not alone in feeling that it would be better ultimately for the Chinese people to drag along in their present rather abject economic condition than to allow themselves to be "industrialized" for the benefit of Western stockholders, just as I feel the strongest sympathy for those few far-seeing Chinese who are doing what they can to keep the mineral and other resources of a country that is almost virgin in non-agricultural matters until they can be exploited for the benefit of their own people. Even if in the end the rewards go to individual Chinese rather than to the nation as a whole, quite as happened in our own land of boasted private enterprise, it is more just for one selfish member of the family to get away with the family patrimony than for a rank outsider to make off with it.

Dr. Sun seems to have seen all this, but with the impatience and impracticality of the idealist he wished to accomplish his vision at once, by force if necessary, overlooking the fact that he not only had insufficient force but that to oppose the "imperialistic powers" with it would be to invite them to retaliate with new aggressions. He and his hasty idealist friends would forcibly abolish concessions and extraterritoriality: All very well, perhaps, if they could do it; though even in the face of Turkish success along similar lines it is doubtful whether natural evolution in this also would not only be surest of results but best for the Chinese themselves, quite aside from the possibly important question of preserving the friendship of the not entirely wicked West. Obviously, warfare aside, the first move toward getting foreigners to give up their special privileges in China is not to show by outbursts of violence that they were not only justified in demanding them in the beginning but that these are still necessary for their protection and that of whatever business brings them to China. Clearer, or at least less impatient, heads than Dr. Sun know this quite as well as do we of the West. A Chinese writer tells his people:

Unless we improve our sanitation, public works, law courts, and demonstrate to the world that we are able to govern just as well, if not better, than our foreign residents, the agitation you see now and then for the retrocession of

leased territories and settlements and the abolition of extraterritoriality is useless, and the clamor of foreigners for the extension of the settlements will continue. On the other hand, if our own districts are well-governed, foreigners will flock into our territory and be ruled by us instead of clinging to the little space they have in the concessions.

As a matter of fact extraterritoriality and concessions just grew. The early sea traders to China were rough and ready men accustomed to carry their own law with them. Naturally the United States or any other country would prefer to have its citizens taken care of and kept in check by the authorities of any foreign land in which they happen to be; but this the Chinese declined to do, partly because they thought it too much of a job, partly, in the beginning at least, because of their contempt for all outside barbarians. It was something of a relief for the various Oriental Governments where "extrality" treaties have been in force, to shift their responsibility for controlling foreigners to the foreign governments. Of course, as "Young China" is now protesting, they were "one-sided" treaties, for Orientals were never given extraterritorial privileges in Western countries. But at the time they were made China cared nothing about making the treaties mutual. China then had a complete contempt for all Western nations, regarded them as inferiors in culture and civilization; except for a few merchants and coolies none of them wanted to visit or live in foreign countries, and the Chinese Government certainly did not care what became of those who left the world's only civilized kingdom and went abroad.

So it was, too, in the matter of concessions. At first the Chinese did not want to trade or have any other intercourse with "barbarians"; those contacts were forced upon them just as in the case of Japan. When the first trade relations were established, at Canton, the foreigners were limited to a specified district miscalled the "factories," and relations with them were circumscribed. Just as in the case of the Dutchman on Deshima Island in Nagasaki Harbor, the segregating of the foreigners was evidence of contempt for them amounting to a belief that they were unfit to associate intimately with the Celestials. When Shanghai and other ports were forced open to foreign trade as a result of the first "opium war," it was again at the insistence of China that the foreigners were not allowed to reside in the Chinese cities, but must live and do their commerce on land set apart for them near Chinese cities. Clear up to the end of the last century many Chinese cities would not allow a foreigner inside the city wall. That is the origin of



the concessions and settlements, and it is interesting to note that at first foreigners protested and wanted to live in the Chinese cities. Now the Chinese have changed their minds also. They see that instead of placing the foreigners in an inferior position, extraterritoriality and concessions gave them a preferential and superior situation, and now they are in a way inconsistent in wanting to abolish the special rights they forced upon the outside barbarians. They have an argument on their sides; the powers have time and again recognized the temporary and casual status of extraterritoriality, and the concessions are avowedly "leased." To-day the Chinese look the world over and find that extraterritoriality has almost disappeared from it elsewhere; moreover it should have been clear to the Allies when they forced matters so that the nations of the other side lost their extra privileges in China that their own turn would eventually come.

As long as justice in Chinese courts or their illegal substitutes remains even more of a travesty under the so-called republic than under the Manchus, foreigners who still have them can scarcely be expected to give up their treaty rights of being tried only by their own laws by their own representatives. The Russians, as well as the Germans and others ill-favored in the late war, having lost their own extraterritorial privileges, would not be inhuman if they now and then whispered into any available Chinese ear that the system should be done away with entirely. The day is coming when it will be, but it will be a sad day for foreign residents, and in some ways for the Chinese themselves, if it comes before much further progress has been made along judicial and kindred lines. The complete reform, in fact and not merely on paper, of China's judiciary system, so that bribery and corruption shall at least become the exception rather than the rule, is essential to peaceful surrender of those rights.

As to the other "unequal" treaties which Dr. Sun would have smashed with his straw shillalah, not a few feel that the concessions will eventually abolish themselves. The time will come, they say, when all foreigners will be driven out of China, not by force, because the West is bull-headed toward coercion, but because the white man will be unable to make a living by trade on the China coast and will be frozen out there as he almost is now in Japan. For the Chinese are rapidly reaching a knowledge of Western commercial methods which, combined with their natural advantages, will make competition with them impossible, or at least unprofitable, which of course amounts to the same thing. Even the thoughtless random

wanderer picks up bits of testimony on this score. The Chinese firm is often a family affair; hence loyalty does not depend on high salaries, and stealings are reduced to a minimum. The foreign firm has to hire half its Chinese force to keep the other half from making away with its profits. The prices in the foreign shop are higher than those of the Chinese rival across the street not only for this reason but because the foreign merchant insists on making a profit commensurate with what he could make at home, plus a goodly increase for the misfortune of having to live in this blighted foreign land, say, net profits of 30 per cent, while the Chinese, accustomed for centuries to simple living and keen competition, will exist on five, three, even two per cent profit if necessary; and one has only to walk into some of the better shops and department-stores in large Chinese cities to find that the Celestial is not only learning the tricks of the import and export trade on which his foreign rival mainly depends, but that he can learn to keep just as neat, orderly, and attractive an establishment as do the men from the West.

Politically the Chinese have not yet shown themselves capable of living up to their standards as merchants. Almost the only public revenue handled rightly in China to-day is that under the domination of foreigners,—from the maritime customs, the postal service, and the salt monopoly. The apparently incorrigible lust for wealth which centuries of a fierce struggle for existence in an overcrowded country seem to have made inherent in Chinese nature almost always breaks out when a man gets office. The chief curses of China, politically speaking, are the maintenance of her large and mainly worse than useless armies, whether in legal formations or in bandit establishments, and official corruption. In a way the Chinese people are fortunate that their national credit is so low, for China thereby escapes the curse of borrowing money for whatever the parties in power choose to spend it, and leaving to future generations the task of paying it back several times over. The per capita national debt of China is computed to be about four "Mex" dollars, less than a hundredth part of that of the United States, to say nothing of Europe.

The West is prone to think of the division in China as merely between the North and the South. It is nothing like so simple as that. In Kwangtung Province alone there were about twenty-seven "governments" entirely independent of one another, and that is typical of much of China. The people are often facing not one civil

war but a dozen going on simultaneously. In theory the Southerners, or "People's party," want states' rights, a kind of local autonomy, and the Northerners want a strong central government; in practice each individual ruler wants all the power and glory, and above all money, he can get for himself and his family. Government, such as there is, has been broken up among scores, and I should probably not be exaggerating if I said among hundreds, of military lords, some of them duly commissioned by the self-styled Central Government at Peking, which, in spite of the fiction maintained by foreign powers in continuing to recognize it as such, is nothing of the sort. Most of these generals are self-commissioned and not only quite independent of one another but in most cases of the putative capital. They maintain their own personal armies for their own benefit, not only seize legitimate revenue wherever they can but levy illicit taxes and contributions upon the territory under their command. In fact, their only visible *raison d'être* is the privilege of taxing to the limit the bits of broken China over which they rule; and the civil wars that harass what has become a deflowered kingdom are almost entirely due to their attempts to maintain or increase their individual taxable territories. It is symbolical of the situation that the huge military flags one sees by the hundred in traveling about the country are almost invariably home-made banners bearing in large characters the name of some general, with possibly a tiny five-bar Chinese flag at the top.

I have called these myriad rulers generals; as a matter of fact only the least ambitious among them are satisfied with so lowly a title, and they have created themselves or had themselves created "marshals," *tuchun*, *tupan*, correctly used only for the military governor of a whole province, even *tuli*, which in spite of its Irish sound and the fact that it rhymes with "coolie" stands for some Chinese exaltation far above anything our simple English language can express. Some of these self-exalted personages who are the real rulers of China to-day have come up from the coolie ranks; more of them are of the old long-finger-nail caste, who have never done anything useful, not even the policing of said finger-nails, as far back as their family records go.

As the only visible motive of the "marshals" and worse who gather armies about them seems to be the grinding of every possible copper out of the people under them, the chief inducement to those who enlist in their service appears to be to assure themselves of full rice-

bowls and to get out of hard work. Up to twenty years ago the soldiers of China carried spears and swords, and though the country may have suffered whatever disgrace is involved in military defeat because of that fact, it was a sad day for the Chinese people when modern weapons and Western-style armies were introduced. Beholding the ways of his commanders, it is not strange that the Chinese peasant or coolie, who has been the under dog for centuries, driven about under atrocious loads or squeezing a bare subsistence from his patch of soil, expects to be permitted to prey more or less openly on the unarmed and helpless civil population within his reach just as soon as he lays aside his carrying-pole or his mattock and dons the thin, fading gray, cotton uniform of the soldier. He has been temperate in his habits less by temperament perhaps than because he was not in a position to be otherwise; now he will make up for the lean centuries behind him with the opium-pipe and the pseudo-pleasures of the brothel. Above all he feels that he has been graduated from the ranks of hard labor, and what is the use of being given a rifle if one cannot use it to make others do as much as possible of the labor soldiering entails? Splendid specimens of the human race though many of us admit ourselves to be, I doubt whether under Chinese conditions we would not do very nearly, if not exactly, the same.

Possibly there is another motive for his unsoldierly ways. The peace-minded Chinese are not naturally soldiers; the military profession has always been rated one of the lowest castes in the Chinese scheme of things. Hence the bullying of the armed coolie in uniform may be partly a reaction to the low order in which he is held; his toughness is perhaps partly put on to offset the loss of "face" his despised calling entails. In Manchu days the possession of arms by the Chinese, except the few enrolled with the Manchu bannermen in the Imperial forces, was a capital offense; and, as habits change slowly in China, the common people have no more adequate protection against soldiers and their first cousins, the bandits, than they have suitable means of hunting in the many districts where game is plentiful and hunger keen. The mere removal of the restriction against carrying arms naturally gives the simple enlisted coolie an exaggerated opinion of himself, just as the placing of power in the hands of those who have never had it precludes the possibility of their using it discreetly.

Discipline and soldierly deportment are not conspicuous among the armed coolies in uniform who now overrun China. Unless he has been

so unfortunate as to be inducted into one of the few good Chinese armies, such as that of the Manchurian war-lord, Chang Tso-lin, of the "Christian General," now Marshal Feng Yü-hsiang, or the recently dispersed but not necessarily disbanded forces of Wu Pei-fu, the recruit probably will have little to do in the way of drilling, and his discipline will consist mainly in eating, sleeping, gambling, opium-smoking, and bullying the civilians. Even though he does not know the meaning of the word "patriotism" as it is used in the West, even though he knows that the "general" under whom he has enlisted will habitually pocket most if not all of the six "Mex" dollars a month which China promises her soldiers, those full rice-bowls two or three times a day, and the freedom from back-breaking labor would be motive enough for turning soldier. The result is that the same coolie you found so admirable a companion on a journey, sober, tenacious, peaceable, indefatigable, good-natured, of wonderful buoyancy, as devoid of laziness as of haste, of complaint as of lassitude or ennui, of discourtesy as of sycophancy, becomes a lazy, insolent bully once he dons a uniform and gets a rifle in his hands.

Most observers conclude that the many armies of China, probably underestimated at two million men, and boys, could not stand up for a day against a real fighting force; others, among them foreign military attachés, assert that this is not necessarily the case, and Ward and Gordon not merely said but demonstrated that Chinese soldiers properly led and disciplined would be the equal of any. Though the average Chinese is a coward, as the Western man in the street uses the word, or at least is one of the most timid of human beings, with a perfectly childish terror of getting hurt, he can die, in cases of necessity, with more equanimity than is shown by almost any other race. The same thing is usually true of armies as of the individuals in them. With no sense of patriotism to back him, with a commander deserving no real loyalty, why should the Chinese soldier fight more fiercely than the retention of his filled rice-bowl requires? The most honored military adage in Chinese history is to the effect that the man who wins a battle without fighting is the supreme commander; this attitude cannot but run down through the ranks, particularly under conditions as they are in China to-day. Many a "general" has not two thousand men; more than once I have seen soldiers suddenly begin recruiting coolies, loafers, boys, any one within reach, and start giving them a hint of the manual of arms. It meant merely that a higher commander was coming to "inspect" and that each "general" must have

the several thousand men his rank requires and for which he has no doubt been padding his pay-roll. If he cannot find men, boys will do; if he cannot furnish uniforms, pajamas serve the same purpose; anything that resembles a rifle suffices, for the "inspection" will not go into embarrassing details, and to-morrow these recruits will be severed from the rice-pot and go back to whatever they were doing or not doing when the command to line up came upon them. Furthermore, most Chinese soldiers belong to secret societies or "brotherhoods," especially the Ku Lao Hwei, or Big Brother Society, and fighting is cramped because even rival leaders, including the late Sun Yat-sen, belong to the same brotherhood. The power of these brotherhoods in Chinese life is not fully appreciated in the Western world, and while members can fight one another fiercely enough on paper, they cannot always easily do so in fact.

Certainly the treatment commonly meted out to their soldiers should not make the average Chinese commanders die of surprise if their men are not eager to be killed for the enriching of their leaders. Another time-honored military adage in China runs, "Do not feed your soldiers well; keep them hungry and keep them miserable, then when the time of battle comes they will be glad to end their wretched existence." I have sometimes suspected that the same notion played about in the heads of some of our own militarists. The generosity of higher Chinese commanders to their simple troops often verges on material for comic opera. General Chao of Hunan is said to have given his officers five, his soldiers two, and his coolies one dollar each, all "Mex" of course, for trouncing his rival from the south and winning back his job as Tuchun in Changsha. I suspect the sums are exaggerated; at least the payments must have been in "small money," if not in shinplasters that could only be passed, even at a great discount, at the point of a rifle. The successful generals of Szechuan in the recent struggle for control of that rich but distant province are credited with giving each of their soldiers a handkerchief or a face-towel, bearing eight characters commending their meritorious conduct "for their country." Perhaps these marks of appreciation were as valuable as the medals we pin on our heroes. Foreigners have often suggested that a handkerchief campaign might be advantageously started in China, but even if the brave troops have learned how to use these new luxuries the wholesome habit is far from having spread to all walks of life.

Though he may have laid aside his carrying-pole and impressed a

coolie to carry his rifle, the lot of the Chinese soldier is seldom enviable. The missionaries themselves are hampered in their work because boys whom they train as nurses run away before graduation and become medical officers in the armies, with soldiers of their own, silks to wear, chairs to ride in, and all the opium they can consume, whereas at the mission hospitals they have to work from six in the morning until eight at night. But the common soldier gets little sympathy, to say nothing of medical attention, when wounds or sickness make him useless to the commander. One meets wrecks of these heartlessly abandoned fellows, as well as impressed coolies who have been worn out and starved in unpaid military transport service, crawling their way homeward; I have met them literally creeping on hands and knees, because they had not strength enough left to stand erect; I have passed with averted nose more than one who will never get home again in any manner.

But we are still in Canton, and Sun Yat-sen is still the "Generalissimo." It is thanks mainly to him no doubt that in theory China is now a republic. The official name of the once Middle Kingdom is Chung Hwa Ming Kuo, roughly the Middle Flowery Land People's Country, and decrees pasted on city gates and temple façades even by bandit rulers in the most isolated corners of the ancient empire are dated "Fourteenth Year of the Chinese Republic." But in fact China is no more a real republic than are the most oligarchic of our trusts; like the mask of the mimer the name is only a thin republican disguise worn over the face of old imperial China. Republics happen to be the prevailing fashion now, but the once Celestial Empire is no more prepared to be one than our own nation is to be transferred intact to heaven. On the other hand China is no longer a monarchy, and many do not believe that she ever will be one again. Whether or not she can ever become a real republic is one of the many questions that only the future can answer.

China's road to genuine republicanism is beset with many and manifest difficulties. The Chinese people at large seem to the Westerner to be devoid of the political sense. Much of the political corruption is due to the fact that the family is the largest unit thus far reached in general Chinese thinking. The peasants and the coolies, the very soldiers, do not attach the sentiment we call patriotism to the conception of an entity known as China. The Chinese owes allegiance to his family or his clan, at most to his village, rather than to

the state. The villages are little groups of related families that have been rooted in their present region for a millennium or more. The average peasant hardly knows that the Ch'ing dynasty has fallen; national government is far removed from the thoughts of the masses, except as a distant demand for taxes. Taxes aside, his interest is entirely taken up with the task of growing enough rice or its northern equivalents to keep himself and his family alive through each succeeding winter. Even in the basic matter of universal education, by all accounts so necessary to the successful establishment and maintenance of a republic, barely a beginning has been made.

Administration of government in China has for many centuries been conducted rather as a business for individuals than as a public service. The great majority still take Confucius literally when he says that for those who are not engaged in governing to mix themselves in politics without a mandate would be as wrong as to cease the rites to their ancestors. The masses are as little interested in general interior problems as in external questions, and nothing could be more complete than that. The Chinese villager is on a small scale nationally what some of our rural senators are internationally. He may realize that life is not all rice and tea, but he sees no evidence of better conditions elsewhere, because he knows nothing whatever of other countries. He sees no newspapers, no books, no "movies," and should a photograph fall into his hands he would not believe it, being incapable of distinguishing between a fantastic drawing and a genuine likeness. A small minority in China do recognize that something is wrong. The merchant feels that something ought to be done about it—anything that will not interfere with business; the students, having more nearly the European than the American point of view as to their importance in political matters, are sure something must be done about it, though they are by no means clear what; a very small percentage of the toiling masses, confined to the vicinity of treaty-ports and a few large cities, have occasionally started to do something about it. But as in the case of anti-foreign sentiment, the opinion, to say nothing of the movement, is by no means general. Moreover, though the outward garb of her government has changed, the same men or type of men still do the governing. The functionaries, the officials, are the conservatives, the lettered, the powerful, cynical, corrupted, those who have the experience of administration and the effective power but not the new ideas. The reformers are naïve intellectuals with ideas, borrowed almost entirely from the West, but with no experience,



no practical political sense, no social position, above all no armies. Between these two parties conscious China oscillates, while the mass of the ignorant population, devoid of all sense of nationality, remains inert and indifferent to all political matters.

“Young China” consists of an uncoördinated company of students, some of whom have had American or European training abroad, more of them at home, and of business men who have been in touch in some form with international commerce. The returned student from whom the West seems to expect so much is by no means the force in political life that so many abroad consider him. He finds his native village unfit to live in upon his return and flees either to the semi-foreign comforts and advantages of a treaty-port and the sure if not princely income necessary to his new standard of living which foreign commercial houses offer him, or to the national or provincial capital to get himself on the government pay-roll. He may be full of progressive political ideas, but the political dictator under whom he must serve wants none of those. The Tuchun or *tupan* may yield to his modern ideas on road-building and model prisons, may even welcome them, and show great respect for the learning of his new subordinate. But when he begins to agitate for political reform, to urge the application of the governmental ideas that form part of his new learning, he is treading directly on the personal toes of the dictator himself and risking his own position, if not his very head. The only visible way the most ardent and properly endowed returned student could bring about political reform would be to gather about him an army of his own and make it superior to those of the established dictator; and not only are few if any of the students capable of that, but military success would probably bring with it the same corruptions of militarism which the ardent young reformer set out to eradicate. The career of Sun Yat-sen is a case in point.

When it comes to general suffrage and similar paraphernalia of republicanism there is little to be said. Nothing like a general election ever takes place; to all intents and purposes no one is ever elected to office, and to tell any man in the street in China that he is entitled to vote and in duty bound to do so would be to convict oneself on the spot of incoherent insanity. Men still pay \$30,000 for such jobs as the magistracy of Swatow, for four months only, with no salary attached. Votes are openly sold for the highest position in the land; the ex-peddler Tsao Kun is publicly known to have paid several thousand dollars each for the votes of members of the parliament,

itself illegally functioning years beyond the terms of its members, which "elected" him president for a little while—ten million "Mex" dollars in all, they say. No doubt the presidency was cheap at the price, since his brief eminence raises not merely the illiterate ex-coolie himself but all his ancestors and all his descendants to an equal rank in the Chinese after-world, where life is much as it is on earth, and high rank as precious as wealth with which to bribe celestial or infernal judges and to buy new concubines. Moreover, he had good precedent for his action. Offices went to the highest bidders under the Manchus; Yuan Shih-kai, who lifted Tsao from the streets out of admiration for his commanding peddler's voice, owed his own "election" to a generous distribution of checks—or of their Chinese equivalent, hard silver dollars.

A popular catchword has it that any people deserves the government it gets; but surely the Chinese, industrious, patient, cheerful under the most provoking circumstances, in many ways lovable, for all their often unpleasant and sometimes exasperating traits, merit better than they have to-day. Yet one should keep in mind that political developments in China are immeasurably less important in the daily affairs of the bulk of the nation than in any Western country. Undisturbed on the whole by the vicissitudes of politics and militarism, the social organization of the masses, centered in the ancient guild-halls of thousands of villages, goes on unchanged from generation to generation, from age to age. While it is real enough in the political field, the confusion is largely superficial, for politics as such hardly touches the lives or the interests of the great majority. For them the government, be it Peking or the local dictator whose rowdy soldiers roam the streets, is little more than a tax-collecting machine, something foreign, automatic, to be endured until it becomes unendurable. Though it is true that many do suffer severely, some of them atrociously, from the existent state of affairs, the stability, the social cohesion, the economic momentum of the toiling masses make them able to maintain their normal life to an astonishing degree. All these agitations, which from afar look like the only manifestations of Chinese life, are only superficial movements on the surface of the great immobile ocean of mankind's oldest living society. All these operations that make such a great fracas are conducted by armies that are little in proportion to the vast population of China, armies in which the same soldiers pass and repass, like those across the boards of Chinese theaters; the protagonists in these military and political struggles are always the same, as alike

as the actors in Chinese dramas—costumes, gestures, and all. Under the scum the true life continues virtually unchanged, for after all each day must bring its daily rice.

Wandering in the China of to-day makes one wonder if perhaps the anarchists are not in a way right after all, whether people might not get along better without governments. It makes one inclined to agree on one point with a British writer whose theories are not in the main acceptable,—that nine tenths of the activities of a modern government are harmful, therefore the worse they are performed the better. It suggests that perhaps general illiteracy is in a way an advantage as well as a misfortune. In China there are no newspaper head-lines, no dime novels, no "movies," nor any of the rest of our sometimes nefarious agencies to make one criminal quickly from another and send a "crime wave" sweeping across the country. Were the present political conditions in China rampant in any land of the West, the chances are that a complete anarchy would reign, outdoing the darkest days of our so-called Dark Ages.

Politically speaking it is hard to be anything but pessimistic toward at least the immediate future of China. There does not seem to be much sign of improvement in sight. Active foreign intervention may come out of the present conditions; international control by the powers has been advocated by many, particularly those who are losing trade through the present chaos. The result would probably be the uniting of all the present warring factions in China to oppose the invaders, and a prompt breaking up into still more factions when the attempt had failed. With the old Central Government virtually removed it seems to many natural and proper that China should revert to local rule; it seems to be the growing consensus of opinion even among many of the people of China that the country is destined to become legally what it is now in fact, a federation of self-governing provinces, loosely hung together, perhaps combined sufficiently to withstand outward pressure. Far-seeing Chinese recognize quite as clearly as do outsiders with the advantage of a detached point of view that as the world is constituted to-day there is no real strength, little likelihood of survival, except as the weak combine to become strong. But China is vast, not merely in territory but in population; the interests of the various sections are as different as the varied languages and rivalries of Europe; it seems a waste of theorizing to imagine that any one man can rule it all. Let one man show signs of being able to unite the country and bring it under his single rule, and the others,

fearful for their present privileges over limited portions of it, will be impelled to unite and fall upon him, as happened so recently in the case of Wu Pei-fu. The "strong man" may indeed arise; he may even now be near the top; whoever he is he is very likely to aspire to make himself emperor and establish a new dynasty, as has often happened before after a period of Chinese political chaos. Possibly, as the missionaries seem inclined to hope, his name is Feng Yü-hsiang, and China may wake up some morning to find a Methodist emperor seated on the throne from which the "Christian General" recently drove the youth who was still emperor in name though not in fact. But a far more likely development, in the minds of those who appear best informed, is no development at all, but a continually shifting maintenance of the *status quo*.

## CHAPTER XII

### SZE YAP, THE HOME OF OUR OWN CHINLSE

**O**N a brilliant June afternoon in early January I might have been seen, had any one thought it worth while to look, wending my way through the narrow-gauge labyrinth of our western suburb, followed by a cot-bed and such other things as even a simple person must have on an overland journey in China, all dangling from the pole of our house-coolie, furtive in spite of his comparative security, in foreign employ, from military kidnapping. Across Shameen with its shady peace and quiet and leisure we broke out upon the wide dusty Bund with its ceaseless hellish hubbub, symbolic of the change from foreign living to the real life in China that again lay before me. For I was off on a wider jaunt around Canton which would not bring me home again that night, nor for many an evening. In fact all my last year's journey in southern China may be described as two great circles about Canton as a center, the first through Kwangtung Province, including its big island of Hainan, and its wilder western neighbor, Kwangsi, the longer one through the great frontier provinces of Yünnan, Kweichow, and Szechuan and back across Hunan.

There was in theory a boat to Kongmoon every day; indeed rumor went so far as to say at three o'clock every day. None but the inexperienced look for exactness in China, particularly in anything having to do with the native forms of transportation; the only certainties are that the fare will not be high and the hour of leaving will be later than whatever time is set—if only one could know how much later. A few minutes before three I took leave of my wife and our furtive house-coolie at the narrow plank precariously sagging from one of the poorer wharves to one of a dozen native cargo-junks, a plank ready to slip off at either end and with its middle splashing the by no means crystal-clear water of the Chu-kiang; yet such is the natural chaos of Chinese life that a dozen men had to push their way ashore on it just when I, and particularly my baggage, was struggling on board. I hasten to admit that I have no descriptive powers even faintly worthy

of that one of the junks to which I climbed my way over several like it. because, as nearly as one could gather from the hubbub, it was about to start for Kongmoon. Native cargo of every description, mainly in wicker bales and baskets, was piled helter-skelter and several times higher than would be allowed in any country with navigation laws, or by any people with constant common sense, while still more was being incessantly thrown on board by shrieking coolies more or less indifferent to screaming bosses almost as numerous, the uproar now and then emphasized by the still louder screeching of some house-boat family convinced that its home was about to be crushed between manœuvering junks. All over the cargo and everything else on the boat, passengers, mainly coolies, with of course no other foreigner so foolish as I, swarmed like rats in a granary, a few stretched out, most of them curled up like dogs in any little hole available, equally contented in every nook and corner of bales and baskets, though not without the constant chattering and shrieking that seems to go with Chinese contentedness. The junk itself was of a complicated, a most astounding shape; an expert draftsman might intelligibly describe it, but not I. Since any one, not merely along the shores or in passing boats, but even among the passengers, might be a pirate, there was a barricade of heavy sheet-iron about the poop, not to mention a group of alleged soldiers, constantly flourishing their weapons about after the boyish Chinese fashion. Mention of these would indeed be misleading, since no one ever expects them to put up a real fight against pirates; in fact we would be fairly well satisfied if they did not suddenly turn pirates themselves, should the loot seem worth it.

Like a dozen less than ordinarily lean and sunburned Chinese passengers, I had a cabin. Perhaps you can picture to yourself a dry-goods box made many years ago by Chinese with prediluvian notions and corresponding tools and a genius for skimping on materials and set up as the corner-stone of several others like it on the lower deck, one thin end opening on the chief gathering-place and noise-emporium of the craft, the two sides flanked respectively by a filthy little runway without railing along the outside of the boat and by a slimy-underfoot inside passageway so narrow that any normal man would have to squeeze along sidewise between the stacked cargo and the three or four similar dens beyond even when no one was struggling from the opposite direction. A hole about eighteen inches more or less square opened—but did not close—in my outside wall and looked out upon a marvel in primitive ingenuity imitating a stairway to the upper deck that retaliated by looking in upon me, while

my door in the inside wall could be fastened after a fashion when I was within but not when I was outside, unless I went ashore again, at peril of being left behind, and bought a padlock and a staple or two with which to mend what had once been the fasteners. Inside there was exactly one piece of furniture, to wit, a wooden shelf built into the ancient dry-goods box like a second floor raised a foot above the other, with a foot-wide space between it and the wall on the door side.

It was hot on board that midsummer day of early January, shut off from the breeze that ruffled the surface of the Pearl River farther out, and one was constantly being driven from pillar to post by the cargo-piling to which there seemed to be no limit, unless one took refuge in the utterly uninhabitable cabin. I should have preferred to spend the afternoon at home in the west suburb; at least it would have been a pleasure to go ashore, not only for the chance to stretch my legs and do a few things I had left undone along the Bund, but because a constant boiler-factory hubbub in an odorous sweat-box is not conducive to patient waiting and peaceful repose.

But I must cut all this short, even if the Kongmoon junk did not. Suffice it to say that though I was assured that three was the hour of departure, and that this was never sufficiently revised so that I dared walk across the sagging plank to the wharf, I saw the Hong Kong steamers come and go again, the never-ending hubbub along the Bund become even more weird with dancing lights, the lunch I had brought for the junk trip disappear down a still hungry throat, and the big clock in the department-store tower point exactly to eight, before the threat to cast off the mooring-lines, which had been made a hundred times during the afternoon, was actually carried out and we drifted amid much shrieking from our own and neighboring boatmen out into the stream and started slowly up the river. The lighted silhouette of the Sun Building and all the Bund waterfront, then darker, quiet Shameen, then the slowly dancing lights of the "flower-boats" off our section of the city crawled away into the past, and gradually the hubbub came to confine itself mainly, then entirely, to our own craft.

It was a beautiful June night, the placid river here and there touched with lights and their reflections, soon only of our own and other boats, most of them at anchor in the stream or along the shore. We had no means of locomotion of our own. A noisy little launch, covering us with its soot and cinders and jazzing our nerves with its constant whistling almost in our ears, attached itself to one side of the junk, on which, when our coming had to be heralded or our position indi-

cated, a man beat with a blacksmith's hammer a huge sheet of three-quarter-inch iron hung over our heads. The steering-gear of our own craft consisted of an incredibly enormous oar at the stern, across which ran a cleated plank on which the several men required to move the thing braced their feet as they toiled back and forth just inside the semicircle of loopholed plate-iron pirate armor. This was the only free space on the junk, and one might have been half comfortable sitting there on the tall slender bamboo stools that lay about, if the constant back-and-forth of the great oar-rudder had not made it necessary to jump up as often as we sat down. At that the discomfort of any other place was so decided that half a dozen of us used the stools, climbing over the rudder or marching ahead of it and back again every minute or two.

The launch seemed to abandon us for a while; then we appeared to be faintly moving again, and I found that somehow or other a tow-line had been attached to us and, apparently, to two or three other high-pooped junks, and that the unseen launch was slowly dragging us all up the river. Strolling along the precarious unrailed path about the sides of the boat just above the water I discovered that there were also at least a hundred women and girls on board, packed in a hot and smelly hole forward and even more unable to lie down than the men, crowded together on wooden shelves in all imaginable places about the craft, who were vouchsafed at least the comfort of stripping to the waist. In fact the women had barely room to lay down their squalling infants; but to sit up all night is nothing in the life of Chinese women of the masses. My fellow-passengers and the boat people were not exactly friendly, but they were by no means the opposite. Yet they were unintentionally troublesome. Now and again one of them shot off a few fire-crackers as a personal joss, and as the chances were fair that we would be boarded by pirates during the night, and that they would carry off with them the foreigner whom the five hours in harbor had given confederates time to tell them about, each volley jerked the nerves to attention. I turned into my cabin at last, while we threaded the intricate delta, and I think that I fell asleep once, for I remember dreaming that the pirates had actually boarded us, whereas it was only another bunch of fire-crackers that had started the train of sleeping thoughts.

Hills grew up ahead in the morning, climbing to lazy mountains here and there on the horizon. Whole villages of cord-wood floated



down the river toward Canton; duck-boats and duck-herders came in sight here and there, handling the fowls by the heads in bunches where we stopped now and then at cheap wooden piers run out into the river; and finally, in the middle of the morning, we landed at Pakkai, not fifty miles as the motor-boat would fly south by west of Canton. This port for the important city of Kongmoon at the mouth of the West River is the chief outlet for the Sze Yap, the "Four Districts," of Kongmoon, Sünwei, Sunning, and Heungshan, from which come almost all Chinese emigrants not only to the United States but to Canada, Australia, and several other parts of the world. If you will step around the corner and ask your Chinese laundryman, you will almost certainly find, if his confidence and your intelligence can be brought face to face, that he came originally, though not necessarily directly, from Heungshan; when you dine in a "chop-suey" house and have *savoir faire* enough to get the keeper or his waiters to tell the truth, you will almost as certainly discover that they come from Sze Yap, one or the other of those four crowded districts of Kwangtung Province, and the same will be true of your Chinese grocer, curio-seller, and almost all the population of Chinatown, of all the Chinese in your land, except diplomats and students. The chances are that when you get one of these neighbors to admit that he understands your question at all, which will mean that he is assured that you are not a prohibition-agent and have nothing to do with the taxes or the police, he will reply that he comes from Canton, or even from Hong Kong. But that is because life abroad has not only made him parsimonious of personal information, though he is hardly so at home, but because he has lost heart, during the many years he has lived among but not with you, of finding any one who ever heard of anything nearer his home town than Canton, or even the British port from which he probably sailed; and anyway "Canton" is our mispronunciation for Kwangtung, and it is true that he comes from that province. That is why it is useless for you to ask those of us who have lived in any other part of China than the Sze Yap to talk to your laundryman in his own hieroglyphy or to astound the Chinese waiter with a burst of his own tongue. Fluent as we may be in the real Chinese language, the only men who can preach to the inhabitants of Chinatown or their scattered prototypes anywhere in the United States, unless it be in such English as they know, are the missionaries who have worked in these four districts and the country round about them.

Perhaps the people of the Sze Yap are bolder than most Chinese,

for it is true that many of them become pirates, and they are not so much afraid of the sea, having lived on the edge of it for so many centuries; but the two chief reasons these districts have furnished most of the emigrants are Macao and Hong Kong. It was easy to get abroad from Hong Kong, as formerly from Macao before the Portuguese let it silt up into a gambling, opium, and singsong resort, and once started the custom grew in these overcrowded *hsien*, particularly after the men who went out to Hawaii and California came back with plenty of money, until going overseas came to be as regular a Sze Yap habit as never doing so is in almost all the rest of China. If the elder brother of Sun Yat-sen had not gone out from the little village of Choy Hung in Heungshan district to try his luck in Hawaii, China might still conceivably be under the Manchus.

As soon as I had performed my social duties by calling on the British commissioner of customs and lunching with the Canadian Presbyterian missionaries whose big grassy compound was a great contrast to the single L-shaped street of makeshift markets that constitutes nearly all the rest of Pakkai, I hurried away to the railway station. Perhaps I should say railroad, for it was plainly of American conception, if not motherhood. There was even a train-boy—the evil, alas, is so often copied with the good!—though the favorite among the things he sold was not chewing-gum but sugar-cane in two-foot lengths, which he skinned with a queer knife like a cross between a plane and a draw-shave, and the peelings and chewed pulp lay thick as a carpet on the rough floor. There were even American hand-cars, but women pulled cinders out of the engines and shoveled crushed stone from flat-cars along the way. Baskets of big fish and of pigs were tossed in with the mail, so that it was not strange that little or no baggage could be checked. It was as slovenly a train as any in China; if the builder himself learned cleanliness abroad, one lone spirit cannot reform a race, and he had lived mainly the life of construction-camps. All the rolling-stock and equipment were in a sad stage of disrepair, not only because of the national Chinese habit of letting things go to wrack and ruin and saving them, if at all, only at the last gasp, but because the political chaos of these last years is deadening alike to ambition and the importing of new things. But it was a real standard-gauge railroad for all that, with three passenger trains a day in each direction, which is more than can be said for the average Chinese railway.

No wonder the people of these districts migrate; the plains between

the mountains were closely limited, and though there were plenty of hills they were pock-marked everywhere with graves. In other words their dead ancestors, who were so strongly set against it, had forced the people of Sze Yap to seek their rice overseas. Yet it was a swarming district still, and a glance showed that it was not because the soil is infertile that for generations now the people of Sze Yap have gone abroad. No part of China perhaps is so intensely cultivated as this densely peopled region, for all its emigrations. This early January day was almost tropical, and the people that were left, or who had come back, were working everywhere in the fields, the men and boys half naked under the blistering sun. Water-buffaloes, palm-trees, banana-plants, papayas—one could not wonder that they prefer to migrate to Hawaii, California, Australia, rather than to really cold places. Cues and bound feet were equally unknown; among the men were many in more or less European dress, though none among the women. They were sturdy women, these of Sze Yap, who would be more plentiful in our own land if the emigrating Chinese had been in the habit of taking their wives with them. On the contrary missionaries have found not a few foreign women, particularly from Australia, married to returned Chinese and buried away in various degrees of sadness in the still dirty villages of this region.

The villages of the Four Districts at a little distance look so much like strings of freight-cars that one might suspect they were modeled after them by men who had worked in our railroad construction-gangs. He who takes time to get inside them will find them as compact sidewise as lengthwise, row after row of houses exactly alike, built of dark bluish bricks, with mildly turned-up cornices, like cars in a great railroad-yard, as closely together as chairs in a theater, and for the same reason; for though there is plenty of room round about it is all needed for the growing of rice and there is none to waste in mere living. Passengers from our train, which stopped every mile or two, made their way to these freight-car villages almost always somewhat off the line, by long slender snaky flagstone paths between the paddy-fields. Along these villagers trotted to and fro, women and girls more numerous than men, a pole on every shoulder, bearing products of the rich, or at least well-fertilized, region,—vegetables of many species, baskets filled with ducks or crowing red roosters, puppies, now and then a cat or two. Nearly all the villages seemed fairly new, some brand-new, but always they were crowded closely together, like sheep surrounded by wolves, and high above even the smallest bulked one or

more stout towers with tiny windows, copies of the pawnshop-warehouses of Canton, some black with age, some shinningly new, as if robbery and violence were a permanent institution in these parts and defenses and places of refuge for the often pirated citizens no less necessary to-day than in centuries gone by.

Kongmoon, not far inland, was just a big Chinese city, crowded, dirty, smelly, overrun with ragged soldiers, important with business because of its situation. More interesting is Sünwei, not far beyond, prettily seated among hills, over some of which climbs an old vegetation-grown wall, newly patched in places, and from the highest points of which spread broad vistas of more and ever higher hills, covered as far as the eye can see with those crescent-shaped stone or cement graves of southern China, graves climbing in white patches to distant summits. Many of the largest of these were new, as if the buried had amassed wealth in America or other favored lands; here and there one with a dozen white markers like guards about it hung on the steep hillside. Many of the house and compound walls of Sünwei are made of a kind of oyster-shell of large size, as if in testimony to the plentitude of sea-food in the adjacent waters of the pirate-abounding delta.

The chief point of interest about the ancient and more or less honorable city of Sünwei is the fact that it is the center of the palm-leaf fan industry, almost the only place, in fact, where that well-known Chinese article is grown. In hollows and low fields along the way on either side of the city are small deep-green plantations of what are better described as palm-bushes than as palm-trees. Some time before maturity the leaves are cut and piled up in what look like haycocks, usually in January. Thousands of women and girls are engaged in the cutting, for which they receive from ten to twenty cents silver per hundred. The green leaves are folded down first into the shape of a closed fan; then they are stretched wide open by a little curved stick fastened to the two outside fronds, and whole acres of them spread out in the sun to dry, boys now and then turning them over. By harvest-time there are usually a few mature and perhaps dried leaves at the top of the tree, which are used for thatching houses and boats and for making those mat-sheds so widely used in the Canton region to offset the housing-crisis and the high cost of construction. When the fan-leaves have reached the color in which we know them they are stacked for a time in exact replicas of our straw-stacks; then coolies trot to town with great bundles of them on their shoulder-poles and great boat-loads of them come down



All about the ancient city of Sunwei, home of the palm-leaf fan, the hills are densely planted with white cemented graves that stretch to the tops of distant mountains



The green palm-leaves, cut when they are nearing maturity, are kept open by little sticks tied to the outside ribs and spread out in the sun to dry



Chin Yee-heh, builder, owner, and still president, at about eighty-five, of the Sunning Railway, standing before a statue erected to him by his fellow-citizens



When the palm-leaves are dry expert old women of Sunwei turn them into fans

the river and its tributaries. The ends trimmed off the leaves are made into rain-coats, and with the trimming the cheapest of the fans, widely used by the coolie and peasant classes of the region, are finished. But the best of them and all those intended for export have the edges bound, and everywhere about Sünwei women intersperse their rudimentary housework by sewing palm filaments around the cut edges of the leaves. Some of the most expert of the older women are reputed to earn as much as forty American cents a day.

Why the palm-leaf area suitable for fans should be restricted to Sünwei district is unknown. Evidently it is due to some nice combination of soil and climate, for beyond a patch about twenty miles from east to west and ten from north to south the business cannot be pursued to advantage. Fan-palms can be grown elsewhere, but they will not produce fans worth the trouble; hence this small region grows nearly all the palm-leaf fans in the world, and grows little else. The tree or bush begins to produce at seven or eight years of age, and yields from five to fifteen fans a year, some of them apparently for hundreds of years; at least there are trees which the grandparents of those still cutting them cut in their day. From 6000 to 10,000 fans per acre is the average yield. If finer fans are wanted the trees are planted more closely together. Six thousand plants to the acre gives the finest quality of fan, delicate and transparent, because the leaves cannot expand in full vigor, those with room to do so being bound with threads of grass to keep them from opening. But close planting requires good soil, much fertilizer, and hard work, so that most of the growers go in for the coarser fans.

I came at length to a town called Kungyik, built a decade ago by returned emigrants. A new tower arose on the river-front, and soldiers on guard at its river ramparts and on junks and smaller boats before it testified to continued dangers. Kungyik was a queer mixture of Chinese and foreign town, though on the whole there was no great evidence of Western influence. The streets were straight and properly narrow, but little less dirty than those of Canton, the town all in all disappointing to one who had heard so much of the improvements brought back from foreign living. Outwardly the principal hotel had a Western aspect, four stories high and looking out across the river and back across the town. But it was a typical Chinese hotel inside, with haphazard cooking going on in what we reserve as the hotel lobby, miserable narrow stairways unswept since Confucius first left home, gambling and the fondling of prostitutes going on openly in

most of the rooms, everything under the sun that has no place in a hotel crowded into it, with no attention to guests or prospective clients from any one until they won it by creating some form of uproar, the miserable rooms containing little, of a desirable nature, except mosquito-nets black with age and lack of laundering sagging about wooden-floored bedsteads covered only with a straw mat bearing the imprint of a thousand previous unbathed guests. Those who wanted it were furnished one unmentionable quilt, the blackened cotton oozing out of it in places like coagulated blood from gaping wounds; and a hard straw pillow ten inches long and six square was no doubt a concession to foreign comfort over the usual porcelain or brick one. A man who had accompanied me from the train prepared to occupy the other "bed" in the room assigned me, which is quite the Chinese custom, but as he complained of illness and looked as if he were at the crisis of something between leprosy and smallpox, he was mistaken in supposing that we were to spend the night together. Besides, there was just room enough in the sad caricature of a chamber to set up my cot between the two platforms masquerading as beds.

I was in no position to argue the matter just then. I had trusted to luck to get along on the few words of mandarin that are similar to those of the Kwangtung dialect, with the added hope of running across some returned emigrant; and in the end I was not deceived. But during the first half-hour of a random stroll the future looked dark. I met a few men wearing hints of American garb, but none of them seemed to know any English; at least they did not accost me, as surely any one would who had actually been in the United States. It was almost dusk, and I was concluding that Kungyik's reputation was as false as many a real-estate boom when a pleasant fattish-looking youth in Western garb stepped up and introduced himself as "Mr. Lee" and in almost the same breath volunteered the information that he was owner—with his family, of course, one took for granted—of the Far Eastern Restaurant on Cleveland's once proud Euclid Avenue; and what was more he showed recent letters to prove it. Though he belittled his English, in the modest fashion of Chinese good manners, he really could talk of anything, with few hesitations and considerable American slang, which he evidently had no notion was not polished speech. He did not see fit to explain what had brought him back to Kungyik, beyond mentioning that with a mother and a young brother to support he had not been able to go long to school, the thought of working and going to school at the same time being of course foreign to his still mainly Chinese training.



Mr. Lee was a friend in need. First of all he went with me to the hotel and talked the unwelcome companion out of my room so politely that he moved in with some one else with expressions of happiness rather than protest. Not even Mr. Lee seemed clear why I wished to pay for the whole room myself when I could cut down expenses by sharing it, but his American sojourn had accustomed him to leave certain questions unasked. Next he found me a real foreign restaurant, though the less said of the table-cloths the better, with of course ham and eggs as the chief offering on the bill of fare, and beer, catsup, and toothpicks on the side. The owner expressed himself as delighted that a foreigner had come at last—he had a well-patronized Chinese section on the floor below—and that it looked as if—well, Kungyik had been built only fourteen years and here was a foreigner (*Mei kuok-ren*, “American,” seemed to be the common term in Kungyik) already doing him the honor. I not only had dinner but breakfast, strangely similar, in the morning, after which the overjoyed restaurateur asked me to write something in the way of a puff that he could put up on his walls. I fear his Chinese clients were neglected during my stay.

Urgent domestic matters called Mr. Lee home before he could even be rewarded with a sip of iceless beer, but he promised to pick me up again early in the morning. Strings of electric-light bulbs made the narrow straight streets visible when I descended to them again, but I soon came upon great glares of light, whole streets of glare, before the wide-open fan-tan dens typical of the Sun régime wherever it reached. About every table were crowds of men, almost all looking as if they earned their money at hard labor, closely watching the croupiers, impassive as Chinese theatrical property-men. Here and there girls in silk mingled with groups of youths playing larger stakes, though they were plainly not their wives. Now and again I caught the eye of a hardy old man in half-American clothing with the indefinable look of railroad construction-gangs about him, something independent in his manner which the stay-at-home Chinese never gets, a hint that he was ready to fight with his fists if necessary, which is not a Chinese characteristic until it has been acquired abroad.

Back at the hotel there was little sleep. The monotonous endless squawk of Chinese fiddles, now and then the yowl of so-called sing-song girls engaged in the more innocent part of their entertainment of fellow-guests—for your Chinese hotel is always more or less of a brothel—the rattle, slam, and scrape of mah-jongg dominoes on bare tables, two or three girls in silk wandering the dirty halls and now and

then looking in upon me with an offering air—China would not be so bad if one could shut the ears, and the nose, at will; the eyes do not matter so much, at least to the hardened old traveler.

Mr. Lee and I were strolling about town next morning when we ran across an individual whom he introduced as "Fred Hang." He was an American, he lost no time in assuring me, born in Portland, Oregon, and recently graduated from one of its high schools. With a cloth cap pulled down over one eye, the latest college-man's-model coat and trousers sagging about his frame, low shoes, loud socks, and a speech as redolent of our streets as it was free from the slightest hint of a foreign accent, there was nothing whatever except the unconcealed eye to so much as hint that I had not run across an ordinary American high-school boy here in the heart of the Sze Yap. His relatives lived here, it seemed, and he had been back once as a "kid," and now he had come again, to get married. In fact, though he did not think to mention that detail himself, I found later that he was to be married that very afternoon. Perhaps because it was the only genuine touch of America to be had in Kungyik, exiled Fred was hanging about the railroad station even on so eventful a day, one leg thrown in un-Chinese fashion over a rail and flanked by half a dozen awe-stricken small boys, a curiously incongruous figure among the swarming Chinese, with whom he could scarcely exchange a word. He didn't care for American girls, he confided, without making it clear whether he meant those of his own race born in America or the bona-fide article; that is, as wives. They were "too fast" and preferred play to work. What he wanted was one of these Chinese country school-girls, and his relatives had found him one. Yes, he "liked Kungyik all right," but found it "very lonesome." He would stay a year or so and then go back, to study architecture in Washington State University. Would his wife go with him? "Not on your life." She would stay right here in Kungyik. That is, once his line was assured, one gathered, he would have done his duty by the family tree and would be free to follow his own bent without any visible encumbrances. The fact that under a recent American law his wife would not be an American, for all her marriage, and that she could never become one, did not appear to have anything to do with the case; he merely did not want to be bothered with her any longer than necessary.

Early in the afternoon I strolled down to the station again and took the eleven o'clock train onward. It was not late, I was assured,

but naturally time has slowed down in this distant corner of Kwangtung. Formerly the steamers from Pakkai waited for the last train, but now they sailed sharply at five, without waiting for its arrival at 4:30. The train was always on time, but the clocks of the Sze Yap had grown less and less capable of keeping up with the sun. The line squirmed on over sandy, for a time almost barren, hills, then across plains spreading to mountain ranges blue with distance, a treeless land for southern China, though nothing like the North. Beyond Sunning, where the railroad splits into a Y and nearly touches the sea on the east, twenty miles away, the less crowded train skirted real mountains, still more dry and barren, a region evidently too rolling for irrigation. Then came another rich valley, with many towns apparently of recent growth and new towers everywhere dotting the landscape, some of them large and elaborate as a rich man's country-house, all backed by picturesquely tumbled but bare mountains. There has always been much trouble from robbers and pirates in this district, doubly so now that many emigrants have returned wealthy, and even as large a place as Kungyik, specially built by the repatriated that they might be free from the grafts of Chinese town rule, is now and then raided.

I spent the night in Sunning, headquarters of the railroad, with the remarkable old man to whom the district owes it. Though it stands in the very heart of the emigration region and has sent thousands of its sons overseas for generations, the town itself was not greatly different from thousands of others in China. In the doorways of petty shops lolled men who had seen hundreds of their neighbors emigrate, and in no small number of cases return full of years, wealth, and worldly knowledge, yet whose very faces said that the old town had always been good enough for them. Many still smoked the old-style water-pipe, the simplest imaginable. Pull up by the roots a bamboo three inches in diameter at the base, cut off the lower three feet of it and insert at an upright angle a tiny piece of bamboo in a hole bored in the middle of it, perforate the partitions, and your pipe is made. Fill this half full of water from any mud-hole, poke the top of the tiny upright full of pressed and shaved corn-silk-like tobacco, soaked in peanut-oil, light it with a stick of incense or a spill of coarse brown rice-straw paper, and your smoking has begun. Repeat ad infinitum and you will know the sensation with which millions of the masses of southern China face life each morning. There were many little red shoes with tiny wooden heels, especially among the old women, and not a few once bound and still half-crippled feet bare in

straw sandals on countrywomen carrying ox-loads of produce into town. Girls of eight or ten trotted through the crowds with a demanding monosyllable, perhaps with a small pig at either end of their shoulder-poles, all with loads that most adult Americans probably could not carry a block. Coolies with the same smooth swift gait, and wheelbarrows of still another shape, picked up or set down at the station what the trains brought and carried away. The temples were so overrun with soldiers that improvised mat-shed ones in the outskirts served as places of celebration when the gods must be propitiated. But there are some hints, too, of Sunning's contact with the outside world. The invisible imports of China include something like a hundred million dollars a year from Cantonese abroad to Cantonese communities at home; Sunning gets its liberal share of this, and money will talk, wherever you send it. There were as many brass teeth per capita as in Japan; large dentists' signs, with two or three such teeth, large as a man's head and very graphic in their reality, painted on them, told in text and figures how much more beautiful a face can be made by the insertion of these improvements. One can always find a man speaking English, when it is needed, in this district. They say that the returned emigrants are very anti-foreign; certainly the people of Sunning and all along the railroad were as discourteous as anywhere in China; yet those I spoke with seemed eager for a chance to talk English and gave the impression of being homesick for the lands overseas.

I came upon Chin Yee-heh, builder, owner, and still, at about eighty-five—for he was evidently not entirely clear on this subject—president, board of directors, and manager of the Sunning Railway, in the station yard before his big two-story office and residence just as he was passing the life-size bronze statue of himself put up by his fellow-citizens of this, his home town, or district. But popularity varies, and stones had recently been thrown at it. He was still sturdy both in mind and body, all his faculties acute, able to read the finest print without glasses, though he was already working for "Jim Hill" with pick and shovel before most of us were born. He spoke a queer but very fluent English; and eyes that seemed to see through all the foibles of mankind, whatever their race, looked out from his furrowed, leathery, worldly-wise, on the whole genial old face, much pitted with smallpox, not too recently shaved. Born in a village near Sunning, Chin Yee-heh went to the United States when he was seventeen, tried to be a miner, worked in a laundry, became a track laborer,

and toiled at various other odd and unvelvety jobs. In time he became a contractor for "Jim Hill," helped to build the first railways in the Northwest, won a fortune, for those days, fairly early in life, lost it again in some sluicing project in land sold him by a sharper. He made a second fortune and came home early in the new century determined to do something for his native district. At least the pirates who make off with so much that is brought back to Sze Yap could not steal a railroad, though soldiers do steal rides on it. He began it some fifteen years ago, almost timidly at first, near the town where he was born. The troubles he encountered still aroused him alternately to laughter and grunts of disgust during the telling. The people were so superstitious that he was forced to build it crooked to dodge the graves and to foil the evil spirits. I recalled that the whole line wound like the old flagstone paths through the paddy-fields; but evidently he dug up many an ancestor before he was finished, for old coffin-boards served every possible purpose, all along the line now, especially as bridges over irrigation-ditches, and there were many left over. Villages where he would not put up a station tore up the line; the Manchus did not believe in individuals, particularly former coolies, doing such things; since the revolution constantly changing "governments" demanded many thousands of dollars to let him alone; hardly had he come home and admitted that he had brought money with him than his whole family or clan descended upon him demanding jobs, or, better still, support in leisure, and now in addition to the railroad he had all of them on his hands. Your old-style Chinese cannot lightly cast off his relatives. The work of his patron saint, "Jim Hill," was done comparatively early in life, as is the American way; Chin's was done after he was sixty-five, which was at least the old Chinese way. It was no simple job for a former Chinese coolie, whatever the experience he had gathered; but he persisted until a line more than a hundred miles long, if it were straightened out, now serves the Sze Yap. He hopes to build sixty miles more, put a bridge across the big river in place of the ferry, electrify the whole line by using the ample water-power handy in the hills near-by, if ever the bandits will get out of them and "governments" let him alone. Sun Yat-sen had done his best to take the whole line away from him; like so many of his kind he regarded the "great reformer" as one of China's chief pests. He had hoped to build a free port seven miles beyond the present eastern end of the line, where there is an excellent harbor, but "of course England would protect Hong Kong by preventing that, just

as the Japanese hinder the development of the Chinwangtao, so near Manchuria."

Toward the end of their reign he had been honored and decorated by the Manchus; he had been made an honorary member of the chamber of commerce of Seattle, where he was mobbed forty years ago but still has a lucrative business. Enlarged reprinted copies of newspaper articles of those and other occasions, in both Chinese and English, including many pictures of himself, decorated the walls of his dining-room, serving also as an outer office, where half-American food is served to foreign guests and the host himself. Though he ridiculed many Chinese superstitions the old man still seemed to believe in *feng-shui*, and to have some curious touch of mysticism, some sort of "bug," a reversion to type perhaps rather than something that had persisted through all his busy life. He solemnly announced that he had been to heaven three or four times and that "God"—being vehement in his assertion that he was no Christian, he evidently meant some Chinese deity—had told him this or that. He was still "adviser," by which he seemed to mean some form of fortune-teller or geomancer, to many Chinese throughout the United States, "even in Washington," as to the place, height, time, and the like that they could build to advantage.

Those who know the old man well say that he is quite anti-foreign, though natural Chinese courtesy even of the coolie class would not have permitted him to show that side to me. The main impression he left with me was a kind of homesickness, a nostalgia for the land where things can be done without the interference of pirates and piratical politicians. "What China needs is a king again," he asserted. "England is all right because she has one; even the United States, though it gets along now while she is so young a country, must have a king when she gets older." Did I have any firearms with me? He regretted, and seemed to doubt, my negative answer, saying that not only did I need them in the Sze Yap but that he would buy any I had at a good price, and I could repurchase at Hong Kong. Perhaps he was afraid of assassination, like most men of standing in the China of to-day; they all want weapons, and he was neither the first nor the last man who should have had no difficulty in getting them for himself who offered me high prices for any I could bring them. The soldiers were always marauding and fighting among themselves, carefully searching the baggage of all returning emigrants. . . . Evidently it was the old story of the prohibition of arms; only the honest are unable to get them.

Two boys hung constantly about him, with a more open show of affection than is common among the Chinese. One of seventeen, who was soon to be married, was a grandson "by No. 3 wife." I caught myself wondering whether he was an American citizen, even though he was born and had always lived in China and did not speak a word of English, for his father, the old man's son, was born in the United States. The ten-year-old boy was his own son, "by No. 5 wife"; both of them were sturdy, intelligent, rather spoiled-looking youngsters. The old man goes to bed at eight every night, but is up with the fore-runners of dawn. The building contained several guest-rooms with fairly clean but wooden-floored beds. As I fell asleep on my cot I caught myself wondering if this is not the type of man that China needs most, a graduate of the famous old College of Hard Knocks rather than the missionary student handed his education on a silver platter or those who spend four or more years under the admiring glances of their American boy—and even, girl, alas!—classmates in our schools and colleges. One detected more hard common sense, more real will and power to do, under the queer English of this old coolie than under the perfect diction of returned students; one had the feeling that one Chin Yee-heh was worth ten Sun Yat-sens in the problems confronting China to-day. Sun talked all his life of giving China a complete railway system, and never laid a single rail. Chin Yee-heh has done less talking, but he has a hundred miles of railroad that really runs and brings much good to his native district.

The shortest way from Sunning to Hong Kong is due east by way of Macao. Pirates have seen to it that few go that way, however, and Chin Yee-heh's railroad makes it quicker to return to the port of Kongmoon and take one of the British steamers. The contrast between these and the Canton junks is so great both in comfort and safety that the few foreigners, missionaries nearly all, who go to the Sze Yap habitually travel a long acute angle by way of Hong Kong. But there is a certain degree of danger on any craft plying the piratical archipelago and river deltas below Canton. For all the union jack at its stern and the speed of its propellers, the officers and first-class passengers of our steamer were shut in by stout iron grilles, bars even over the stairways, barbed-wire entanglements, sharp iron pickets, and sheet-iron barricades loopholed for rifles, these latter in the hands of East Indian guards more or less constantly on the alert. Even these precautions had been proving more and more useless of late; indeed, the captain of this very boat was killed by pirates not

many trips later. The "boat-train" that came in just before we sailed had packed the Chinese quarters of the ship below decks, and no one knew how many pirates might be on board, ready to storm the bridge in force or catch the impressive-looking but simple turbaned Sikhs off their guard.

If the rest of China has to endure its bandits this great delta of Kwangtung has an even greater plague of pirates, perhaps the most bloodthirsty and ingenious, certainly the most experienced, of all followers of the black flag. The fiercest buccaneers of the Spanish Main appear as amiable and benevolent Robin Hoods compared to these rapacious human vultures of Kwangtung's rivers and islands. Nor did they become a memory of the past under Sun Yat-sen, as some of his propagandists would have us believe. If anything they are more numerous and ruthless. Since all have a price on their heads they wisely prefer to lose them for a score of murders than for a meager one or two, and they enter into the game of robbing and killing with a courageous malice and a cheerful deviltry that knows no bounds. From generations of killing for gain they seem to have developed a love for killing for its own sake and make it hard indeed for those who offer unsuccessful resistance. Several large steamers under foreign flags were looted as thoroughly as by confiscating custom officers during our short stay in Canton, and not for the first or the last time. A big new ferry-launch plying between Hong Kong and one of the outskirts of Kowloon calmly disappeared, passengers and all, one evening, and it was days later that those not worth holding for ransom began drifting back from some pirates' retreat. Not even our own bandits have thus far ventured to steal a Staten Island ferry. The boldness and ingenuity of the Kwangtung pirates grow apace, and the mortality in foreign captains has become a serious problem. For whatever else they do the pirates make as sure as possible of killing the commander of the craft to be looted, so that commanding a coastal steamer in any of these waters has come to rate high among perilous occupations. Much discussion raged in maritime and governmental circles as how best to replace the mainly, futile system of barricades and Indian guards, but at last accounts it had reached nothing more serious than a pronunciamiento by the Hong Kong Government that: "It is the duty of the master and other certified officers to resist to the utmost any piratical attack. This obligation is imperative, and no discretion may be exercised as to whether or not to resist pirates." Very bold and brave—from the safe confines



of Government House. Many an officer is prepared to obey the order, but one need not wonder long what would have been the action of those bold Hong Kong officials if, instead of making their rare trips to Kowloon by private yacht, they had been on board the ferry stolen from under their noses.

Amateur statisticians say there are ten million pirates along the broken, mountainous, island-strewn coast of southern China. The labyrinthine delta below Canton has been noted for them for centuries. The calling passes from father to son, usually by whole clans or villages, which fish and grow rice in their spare time between raids. So many of their women have been captured from their more peaceful neighbors along this polyglot coast that the wives commonly speak a different language from the men, who no doubt have found it convenient to maintain a business dialect. Behind their pretense of fishing and farming the pirates have an immense, efficient, and surprisingly up-to-date organization. In addition to gasoline-launches they have long boats varnished smooth as glass, with twenty-five rowers and half a dozen sharp-shooters, which consider it no feat at all to overhaul even the swiftest motor-boats known to those waters. In equipment, in arms and ammunition down to the latest machine-guns and the largest and most effective cannon, the pirates are so far ahead of the mere Government that Chinese gunboats of the largest types that can navigate these regions, some of them with British captains, often do not dare go inside this or that island on which the pirates have a stronghold. The pirates scorn to engage in petty robbery; big hauls and large ransoms are their chief interest. They are particularly given to watching for and looting emigrants returning from America and other places of plenty, knowing that these are almost sure to have money, and there have been many hints that the pirates have an intelligence system worthy of any general staff. Many is the laundryman in the United States who would have returned home and settled down but for the great risk of losing all he has saved between Hong Kong and his own village. The south coast is strewn with stories of old men back from a lifetime of hard work in America who have been robbed of everything on this last leg of the journey. Some of them are cheerful losers; one old fellow who lost several thousand dollars and was left without a copper to show for forty years of toil pulled out an ancient key-winding watch and dangled it before the eyes of his townsmen, gloating, "I fooled them; they did n't get all I had anyway!"

Of the brutalities of these squint-eyed corsairs there is ample evidence. Rather than waste time guarding prisoners they commonly tie them to stakes or chain them out in the sun, sometimes to roll about in their own filth for weeks. The value of time and the virtue of promptitude are impressed upon their victims. Now and then the captors send a finger or a toe, a hand or a foot, to those they hope will pay the ransom, until more than one captive has returned home piecemeal. If no ransom is forthcoming the pirates sometimes let it go at that, without troubling themselves further with that particular case, so that those who have ventured into their retreat have come upon chained skeletons, or heaps of human bones with rotten bits of rope leading from them to a tree or rock. Sometimes in lieu of ransom those unable to produce enough to satisfy the pirates, or whose kith and kin pay too slowly, are gradually tortured to death before the others, that they may urge prompter payment for themselves and for those who may be captured in future. A father half an hour late with his ransom saw it thrown into the bay and his son shot before his eyes. It is common knowledge that the pirates of Kwangtung often eat the hearts and livers of their victims, especially of those who have shown unusual bravery, and American missionaries working with the lepers among them have often seen human galls hung up to dry before they are made into "medicine."

The pirates are not cut off with their superstitions and brutalities from the outside world nor confined to Macao for their recreations and foreign contacts. An American missionary who was robbed of everything but his abbreviated underwear and his hat demanded to see "No. 1 man," saying that his feet were soft and that he really must have shoes. The leader of the bandits came, addressed him in almost faultless English, and found his request for footwear reasonable. As he pulled on the old Chinese shoes that were allotted him the missionary made so bold as to ask where the chief had learned English so well. "Oh, in a Philadelphia Sunday-school," he replied casually. There are two of our countrymen in mission work whose duties take them often among the pirates. One of them was standing in a robbers' retreat one day, with the latest make of automatic pistols pointed at his heart and head, when a man came up behind him and asked in English, "Do you know we are pirates?" "Yes," replied the missionary, whereupon the fellow repeated the question in French, Portuguese, and Cantonese, whether to air his

linguistic abilities or to make sure that the prisoner understood him was not clear. He was a Portuguese-Chinese half-breed not yet thirty years old and leader of a considerable band, and in the course of casual conversation later he mentioned, with no hint of boasting, that he knew he had killed at least eighteen hundred people with his own hands.

Chivalry, or at least a certain grade of trustworthiness, is not unknown among the pirates of the Cantonese delta. The late Wu Ting-fang stood high in their estimation, and I have seen undoubtedly authentic pictures of that stately old gentleman strolling about among the pirates in the heart of their retreats, with a few of his own guards, to be sure, but these could have given him slight assistance if the pirates had chosen to attack him. They honored him so highly that once when they sacked a boat on which were several boxes bearing his name they came back to ask if he was on board. "No, but his wife is," was the answer. Led to her state-room the leader of the band gave her courteous greeting and said: "Madam, we did not know that you were on board or we should have awaited another occasion. Will you be pleased to count over your boxes, which we have brought back, and see that nothing is missing?" It was Wu Ting-fang who gave the missionaries in question a small island on which to establish a leper colony. One of them marched into the pirate village on it and said to the chief, "Now, this island belongs to us; we will be glad to have you stay, but we must ask you to pay rent." Contrary to the conventional tales of piracy the chief agreed, and the pirates pay a nominal sum of a few strings of "cash" a year for the right to remain on an island that they have held for generations. Worse still, the money goes to help support the native preacher who lives with his leper wife on the opposite side of the island, and who preaches not only to the lepers but to the pirates themselves. Of the freedom with which these now trusted missionaries go and come among the pirates, sometimes taking their wives with them, often coming on gunboats loaned by the "Southern Government" which would not dare go close to the islands without missionary protection; how three blasts of a whistle bring a boat-load of corsairs, motionless until then, rowing out with shouts of welcome for the man just back from a year's furlough among the "sinners" of our principal Chinatowns; how the bald head with which he is blessed saved a boat from being destroyed by the simple expedient of removing his hat, followed by profuse piratical apologies,

I shall not speak, lest I be accused of wasting time. The missionaries think that the pirates will never be conquered but that they may be converted, that it is merely pressure of population and economic necessity that makes them pirates. But does conversion cure that?

## CHAPTER XIII

### “SOUTH OF THE SEA” TO HAINAN

**T**HERE are several steamers a week, under various flags, from Hong Kong to—well, to anywhere, of course, but for the moment let me confine myself, in so far as a naturally wandering mind can be confined at all—to Haïphong in French Indo-China, and most of them call at the island of Hainan, China's greatest overseas possession, now that Taiwan, which we call Formosa, has been taken from her. If you miss all those, or, what is still more imminent, find that their two cabins each are filled and that a rigid caste system forbids the carrying of white men in any but first class, you may be able to get passage, at the same high fare, on one of the irregular bottoms that go to Hainan for salt or alkali or something of the sort. Thus it was that fate assigned me to the *Yue Ping Wa*, evidently of the decayed gentry class, for surely it had seen better days than these.

It was Chinese owned, for all the Hong Kong union jack at its stern, but like so many of the tramp steamers in and about the China coast, it had a British skipper—one might almost make it narrower and say Scotch, though there are a few exceptions—and three other officers of similar Union Jacobus brand. When I first met him outside the den that served the one-ship line as office he was merry with shore grog; but though he was visibly not at the top of the Board of Trade efficiency list he had about him something to suggest that he never got beyond the ability to navigate himself without a pilot. Not the same could be confidently said of his three officers. None of them had ever been on this “packet” before; indeed, there were hints that she never did carry the same officers twice, nor the same skipper long. The chief mate was a cartoonist's inspiration; he looked as if he had been picked up off a garbage-heap, and his uniform from another, or rented from the lowest grade of Chinese theatrical costumers. Though a young man, his nose was permanently lighted and his face already marked with a lifetime of dissipation. The two Scotch engineers, with more will-power left, had not let themselves go quite so far in the clubs and bars

of Hong Kong which British ships' officers from the four points of the compass make the hub of their universe. In fact independence of spirit rather than dependence on spirits was probably the snag on which their once promising careers had been caught.

But they had one and all turned over a new leaf, and the sugary, highbrow, beneficent, patriotic treatment and conversation with which they entertained one another was a vaudeville sketch of the first magnitude, though it was all too evident that this was the first line of a new leaf that would soon be as besmirched as all the others of their smudgy book of life. Now that they had another chance, another "berth," when they had concluded, as they came to consciousness in the gutter once more, for the Lord knows which time, that there was no hope left, they were going to make good, to stay off the booze for life—or whatever the British forms of those expressions are; henceforth they would behave like saints, before they lost their "tickets" entirely. So they walked with angel tread and talked in the dulcet tones of Victorian dowagers, only on professional or at least the most respectable of general subjects; all the time one could see as plainly as the first mate's nose that before the end of a week they would be reverting to type and throwing at one another the verbal bilge-water of the fore-castle to which, at least in self-control, they belonged, and that by the time, three weeks or a month hence, they were back in Hong Kong they would make tracks straight for the gutter again. But now, doubly on their good behavior with a "first-class" passenger of their own race but a somewhat rival nationality on board, they gave their orders in splendid imitations of the captains of great liners, and the Chinese sailors, who stuck to the ship not for trips but for years, carried out their duties exactly as they would have done without any orders, with outward attention but an inward sense of the nonentity of their foreign officers.

As a matter of fact there were few orders to give during the first two days in their new berths. I had rushed down from Canton and been rowed breakfastless out to the *Yue Ping Wa*, only to be told that some papers without which she could not sail without paying a fine to the maritime customs at her destination had missed the boat that had brought me down river and that we could not leave until noon next day. I had been several times in Hong Kong and would be there several times again; it happened that just then I had nothing particularly to do ashore; the time was just too short safely to run back up to Canton again; my note-book was calling for attention; I decided to remain



His Chinese Majesty, the pig, declines to transport himself to market and thereby gives the coolies, particularly of this island of Hainan, much labor at sometimes pork-buying wages



One wondered how these immense water-wheels that lift the rivers of Hainan into the thirsty rice-fields are put in position in a land of unassisted man-power



Lifting in sections of bamboo set at a slight angle the water of the streams that turn them, the home-made water-wheels of southern China pour it into crude troughs that carry it off to the fields



Sometimes, when the force of the stream is not sufficient, the peasant must himself furnish the motive power of his immense irrigation-wheels



on board. So did the four makeshift officers, though obviously for rather different reasons. I doubt whether even the engineers had a copper between them, which was at least a secondary drawback, and of prime importance was the fact that if they risked themselves ashore again they were in grave danger of seeing their new berths sail away without them, or fail to sail for lack of them, which from a Board of Trade point of view would be quite as serious. So we all stayed, and had a regular sewing-circle debauch for a day and a half, broken by descents into the hatch-hole many years since turned into a dining-room, in which we shared very courteous but terribly English meals.

Tied up to a buoy like one house of a score of streets made up of the ships of all nations in the densely blue harbor, I looked forward at least to a cool and quiet night's sleep. But all that evening and all night it blew cats and dogs, until the *Yue Ping Wa* rolled literally like a log. The "first-class cabin" consisted of a deck-house much like a kennel, an afterthought that had been thrown up at one extreme side of the after-deck, because now and again a foreigner in the customs service had to stay on board. Unlike the rest of the ship, which was merely owned by them, this hutch had been built by the Chinese, so that every possible half-inch in space and materials had been saved. But except that its one fore-castle bunk was short and too narrow and too hard and too long since fumigated and otherwise made savory, that the rattle of the rudder and chains of the long-standing candidate for the maritime dump-heap made a terrific racket almost at my head all the unbroken night, and that my attention was constantly needed to save myself from violent injury as I tossed now well up the side of the wall above the bunk, now out into the fortunately very narrow space between the bunk and the door side of the cabin, I passed a night that might possibly have been worse. I might, for instance, have fallen asleep and been inextricably wedged in the space above mentioned, and certainly the owners would never have consented to tear the "cabin" down merely to save one not even British passenger.

There was one agreeable surprise. Though the gale was still blowing so next day that it was an acrobatic feat to stand up, let alone stand still, we did get away by noon. As the *Yue Ping Wa* slowly turned her dirty nose out through the southern, as opposed to the now familiar eastern, entrance to Hong Kong, I hoped for a rest. But the rolling had become chronic. We rolled all day and we rolled all night, we rolled all next morning and most of the afternoon, for though we should easily have been in what passes for the harbor of Hoihow early that second

day we—well, it was foggy, to be sure, and Hainan Straits are among the most dangerous in the world. Many a ship's skeleton lies along that shallow channel which came so nearly leaving Hainan a peninsula—we saw at least two of them for all the extraordinarily low visibility that left the shores to be guessed rather than seen—and pirates often ply their trade there, so that one is fortunate enough to be steered past this Oriental Scylla and Charybdis at all.

Hainan has but few harbors, and Hoihow, its principal, indeed its only legal and therefore obligatory port, is not one of them. For certainly the broad shallows beyond Hainan Head here on the northern coast of China's greatest island is the worst landing-place in the world when the tide is out and by no means worthy of the ancient and honorable name of harbor even when it is in. There is a good one around on the eastern side of the island, and a wonderful landlocked bay, sheltered from every wind that blows—and they blow indeed around Hainan—deep enough to give anchorage to ocean steamers of any size or nationality; but those subtle forces that ride the seas keep them from being used. The great drawback of the best harbor is that it is in an almost uninhabited part of the island; the Chinese say that it is unlucky; at any rate the lone foreign customs officer once stationed there gave evidence of going mad, and the work has been concentrated at Hoihow. Besides, ships which make Hainan a port of call to and from Indo-China do not care to go clear around the island. There are a few other small harbors, some of them the abodes of pirates, most of them full of fishing-boats, with junks from as far away as Singapore at the one season of the year when the winds are right. But at Hoihow ships often toss about in the shallow open roadstead for days before customs or cargo boats can get out to them, and passengers almost always have to climb like pilots up and down rope-ladders with the ship tossing and waves clutching greedily at them, an especially striking experience with small children.

The shore was only dimly seen from where we anchored. I fancied I could make out a few whitish buildings, but could not be certain that they were not something else. Then out of the shore haze broke half a dozen, a dozen, heavy, clumsy open boats, each with a single sharp-pointed triangular sail, racing like capering steeds, to bring up as jauntily as cowboys, with a sudden twist of the rudder and a simultaneous dropping of sails, the ratan ropes and twisted strips of bamboo serving as rings rattling down the native tree masts, at the very side of the steamer toward which they had been speeding before the high wind

at the rate of motor-boats. The third or fourth to arrive contained the young Englishman whose duty it was to be the first on board all incoming vessels, and behind him up the ladder crawled a Russian, likewise in the uniform of the Chinese maritime customs, who was doomed to bunk in the kennel I had just left until the ship was ready to sail again. How bitter life has become for the former children of the czar is suggested by the fact that although it invariably made this one deathly seasick even to sit on an anchored steamer, he had taken a job that often kept him out in the harbor for weeks at a time.

Within less than an hour after we slid pilot-fashion into his boat the Englishman and I had tacked our way under his orders and the exertions of half a dozen Chinese in the blue sailor suits and wide straw hats of the customs service to the point where half an hour of poling brought within reach the welcoming hand of a missionary I had known at Kuling. This was swift traveling for Hoihow, where even the customs men spend from four to six hours in getting out to a ship and back at high tide and under normal conditions. In anything like abnormal ones they do not get out at all, and the member sentenced to stand watch on board has been known to be incomunicado for a week. When the tide is out they can shorten the trip by hanging shoes and trousers over a shoulder and wading out to a sand-bar, to be picked up by a sail-boat sent out hours before. But, then, they have n't much else to do in Hoihow, which is perhaps why the old-fashioned commissioner of customs will not ask for a motor-boat. Only recently had he been prevailed upon to get life-preservers, no doubt feeling that with plenty of applicants for jobs in the service they were not greatly needed; and by the time they have spent the two years that is the usual assignment in Hoihow his foreign subordinates are inclined to set the same cheap value on their lives.

It is one of the amusing things of China to watch the workings of the British or European caste system in the Chinese customs service. In the larger ports it is a social *faux pas* for an "inside" or office-occupied foreigner in that service to recognize on the street an "outside man," even of his own nationality. For the latter examines and guards the actual cargoes, which comes so near being physical labor that the old-world scorn for the toiler applies. Apparently this spirit was fostered by the expert appraiser of feminine charms who organized the present establishment as an added barrier to "understandings" that might grow up between the two branches, to the possible loss of revenue through corruption. But the rank and file cling to it as the rural Chi-

nese of some provinces cling to the braided badge of servitude forced upon them by the conquering Manchus. Nor is its maintenance weakened by the fact that a Britisher always heads the service, not because the majority of the exports and imports of China are actually of British origin or destination, which would suffice under the treaties establishing the present status of the Chinese maritime customs to bring about this result, but because a large proportion of them are transhipped at Hong Kong and thereby become technically British goods or imports. There is no cause to criticize this arrangement. Under the British the customs are unquestionably as honestly administered and China herself no doubt as fairly treated as would be the case under American preponderance, and our own youths are less hard-pressed for opportunities for suitable careers than are those of our mother-country. But the resultant organization bears all the earmarks of this circumstance.

The letter-head of the American Presbyterian Mission which has the salvation of Hainan in its keeping bears a map of the island and the projecting point of the mainland that so nearly makes it a peninsula, as perhaps nature will in a few centuries. Many is the man who might otherwise spend much precious time searching an atlas for the point of departure of such a letter. The same stationery informs us that China's "South of the Sea" is shaped like a walnut, pointing northeastward, between the eighteenth and twentieth degrees of latitude, that it is 115 miles wide and 155 long, and has a population of two million. Except for the suspicious exactness of the round figures we have no choice but to believe these statements, for the mission has been in the Hainan field since 1881. Having a passion for exact truth most worthy of their calling, there are a lot of other things for which the missionaries will not so definitely vouch, such as the legend that Robinson Crusoe landed in Hainan on his homeward journey.

Hainan was conquered by the Chinese, in so far as it ever has been, during the reign of Wu Ti, a century or more before the Christian era. Tradition has it that the island was used as a penal colony, or at least as a refuge for exiles, and it is in such bad repute among the Chinese as a whole that recently a magistrate in a southwestern district is said to have purposely offended a superior, in the hope of being degraded to some mainland post. Seated almost in the bay of Tonkin, much nearer the Annam coast of French Indo-China than even to Hong Kong, France obtained the promise of the Chinese Government in 1898 that Hainan would never be ceded to any other power, one Manchu

promise the republic has thus far kept. What are commonly called the Hainanese are, like the "Formosans," largely Chinese of Fukien origin and tongue, though there are also many Cantonese, some of the immigration dating back many generations. Then there are Hakkas from the mainland and, chiefly in the mountainous interior, several tribes of what may be, as they claim, the aborigines. In most of the island the women closely resemble those of the Foochow district, less the dagger head-dress, with plain black blouse and trousers, shapely if deeply weathered legs, and the sturdy carriage of those who carry heavy burdens on shoulder-poles. Like the Indian women of the Andes, they are worth their keep merely as beasts of burden, yet they are not so devoid of conscious sex-appeal, at times displaying even a suggestion of coquetry. How hodgepodge must have been the immigration is suggested by the fact that the district cities of Ngaichow, of Damchow on the northwest, as well as the market-town of Nodoa, are mandarin-speaking, while Kachek, sharing with Nodoa the first place of importance among interior towns, speaks mainly the tongue of Canton, and Sama in the far south is Mohammedan.

Politically Hainan was just then in a mess, like China as a whole. If it had any real adherence it was at the moment with the "Southern cause," as befitted its position as a part of Kwangtung Province. But it was mainly in the hands of local military dictators, the most prominent of them holding Hoihow and Kiungchow, the capital, three miles inland. The air was full of stories of his ruthless rule. Within the week he had ordered five men shot for quarreling in a gambling-place; another was executed for taking both the ten-dollar bill he had stopped to change into "small money" at an exchange shop and the "small money" itself, quite possibly by mistake. Long careful trials were not to the taste of the Hoihow dictator. A day or two before several men had been brought to the yamen charged with some petty theft or misdemeanor. The dictator sent out to ask how many men there were; some one said nine, and nine were shot. A little later it turned out that two of the men were coolies who had just brought in loads for the yamen residents. But there was probably no prick of conscience or loss of sleep on the tyrant's part over this slight mistake; life is nothing to the Chinese of his class, especially the life of the ordinary people. Many of the rulers of China to-day say frankly that there are too many of the coolie class, and welcome the famines and floods and similar catastrophes for which we of the West, or at least of Santa Claus America, subscribe relief.

Seeing day after day, month after month, all over China the same endless file of coolies of both sexes forever trotting under their burdened shoulder-poles, along the dirt roads of the North and the meandering flagstone paths of the South, it would not be impossible to descend to the same valuation and consider the loss of a few thousands of them no more important than the destruction of a train of leaf-bearing ants in the jungle. But one is always glad in the realms of these ruthless despots that the foreigner, at least of the fourteen lucky nationalities, is still free from this summary treatment and is in consequence treated with a special respect.

There is nothing much in Hoihow, or even in Kiungchow, really worth landing in Hainan to see—our missionary friends of course excepted. A treaty-port since 1876, so that foreigners are no new sight there, though they are in much of the island, Hoihow consists of a score of foreign buildings housing missionaries, consuls, customs and post-office men, some of them already old, but all of them imposing in such surroundings, backed by a town of a guessed population of forty thousand, quite like a hundred thousand other towns in China. One must go farther inland to make the trip worth anything except the ability to boast that one has been on Hainan, and is therefore in that much different from the great majority of mankind.

Thanks to my delay in Hong Kong, the market-boat which every four days went up the considerable river that comes down to Hoihow from somewhere in the interior had just left. But Hainan had recently made a great stride forward in civilization and was promising to try out a new motor-boat in the morning. As its starting-place, because of sand-bars at the mouth of the river, was three miles beyond Kiungchow, already three miles inland, I had to spend much of what this time I was sure would be a long restful night in a comfortable foreign bed, far from the madding crowd of the native town, packing such of my belongings as seemed indispensable for a trip inland and making other necessary preparations. Then I was dragged out of bed at four next morning for a long walk through narrow, slimy streets. The local dictator had recently made a wide dirt road to the capital and was threatening to bring it on through Hoihow itself, but thus far the port city was still in its ancient Chinese glory. On the outskirts of the town I embarked in one of several Fords, already showing sad evidences of the ways of Chinese chauffeurs, with an old coolie long in the service of the missionaries and lent because another could not be picked up on such short notice.

There were also some sedan-chairs, now absurd in price, because the rickshaws that tried for a while to get a foothold on Hainan had been driven out by the guilds of the other types of conveyance, some long-handled wheelbarrows mainly for freight, and not a few carriages closely related to the medieval Japanese *basha*, all in the last stages of mud and rattle, each drawn by one horse, or what had been in its youth and might in a well-fed state still be a horse, altogether the most marvelous contraption ever seen outside a cartoonist's picture of the equipage of a Southern ducky. All these, not to mention the inevitable almost unbroken file of coolies, were making their way along the proud new road to the island capital.

The Ford dropped us outside the imposing old crenelated wall of Kiungchow, its lava-like stones, of which there is a plentiful supply in the vicinity, almost completely hidden under semi-tropical vegetation often reaching the size of trees. Workmen and women were nonchalantly chopping a wide breach in it, that the new road might enter the city. We were forced to hurry on, along meandering paths irregularly lined by grave-hummocks, a tuft of sod of inverted cone shape on the top of each giving them a resemblance to a medieval hour-glass, past open spaces with big trees, gardens, rice-fields, ponds of opaque water, every few minutes through a village. It looked as if our early rising, Ford bumping, and trotting under a sun that grew equatorial as the morning advanced had been in vain, for after my carrier had lost our way two or three times and began to weaken under what would have been no load at all for him in his prime, coolies coming from the opposite direction took to telling us that the *chi-chuan*, the new "spirit boat," was gone. None but the inexperienced take the rumors of the Chinese trail as final, however, until they are visibly confirmed. We trotted on, dripping; the old man carried me across a sliver of river to save the time I should have lost with my shoes; we sprinted over a long stretch of sand until not an ounce of strength was left us, to find the launch not only still tied to the bare sandy bank but with no intention of moving for another hour. Some small official, it seemed, had sent word that it was to wait for him.

I judged from the wonder of the country-side as we chugged our way at last up the wide shallow river that this was not only Hainan's first motor-boat but that it was making its first trip. Whole villages stood out against the sky-line on the high banks gazing motionless at the strange noisy craft; boats skimming down-stream under one

sail, usually of matting; less hasty craft crawling in our direction with the help of the wind, when it had any to offer; long rows of trackers toiling all but naked and sometimes on all fours along the shore, dragging cumbersome cargo-boats up-stream by tow-ropes from the top of the masts, all turned to stare at us with an expression which seemed to say, "Well, now, what evil spirit makes that thing go without even bamboosing?" For go we did, racing up country at a speed Hainan had never known before—six or seven miles an hour, except on those numerous occasions when we stuck on the sandy bottom. But is there any other country in the world where the steersman of a motor-boat would get out into the stream to his waist to help lift or push it over the shallows—I mean often, as a regular thing? The trackers seemed to gaze not merely in wonder, tinged with envy, but with a suggestion of resentment, as if they were saying, "These outside-barbarian things will be taking our jobs away from us if we do not look out"—the same spirit that drove the rickshaw out of Hoihow and tried to keep the air-drill out of our mines. The river craft of Hainan were as heavily laden as anywhere in southern China; many a cargo-boat barely had its center above water. For those not even in the bit of hurry our launch furnished, the native freight-boats seemed to be fast enough and, in contrast to our scant dozen, passengers were so thickly strewn over the other ascending and descending boats that the loads of some of them were completely hidden from view.

One of the great problems of southern China is to keep its rice-fields flooded, and in addition to sluiceways worked by man, woman, child, donkey, cow, and water-buffalo the huge water-wheels run by the stream itself which are found in some parts of Kwangtung were numerous along this main river of Hainan. Long weirs of water- and weather-blackened bamboo stretched here and there diagonally across the wide stream sent most of its now scanty water toward these irrigating-wheels along the banks. In each of the dams had been cut a single narrow passage through which the water rushed madly, making it hard for the old-fashioned boats to pull and pole their way up through them and bringing even the motor-boat almost to a standstill. One wondered how the immense water-wheels, forty or more feet high and made entirely of bamboo, were placed in position in a land where, outside the foreignized seaports, there is nothing resembling a derrick. Dimly seen against the dense green foliage of the high banks, turning slowly but steadily, in keeping with the land



they serve, lifting in sections of bamboo set at a slight angle the water we also needed, these crude home-made contrivances forced the river to pour itself into rough wooden troughs that ran it away into the thirsty rice-fields, so high above that we could rarely see them. Sometimes, when the stream has poured out its strength until it is too weak to offer further self-sacrifice, the peasant himself must furnish the motive power by getting on top and treading the wheel all day long. It is strange that with all their genius for such mechanical contrivances the Chinese never invented a windmill.

Where the launch deposited us at three in the afternoon and left the rest of the journey to our own feet, hundreds of pigs were awaiting shipment down river and over to the ever pork-hungry mainland. All the ground under several huge old wide-spreading trees was covered with them, and more of them were pouring into this two-row village of makeshift shop-huts on either side of the end of a much traveled overland trail so rapidly that evidently there was work for every one who wanted it. Each porcine aristocrat, helpless in his tiny withe cage, like a network garment made of bamboo splints, was deposited with the shaded acres of his fellows, and the carriers, after sipping tea until the sweat on them dried, and perhaps wrapping themselves about a huge bowl of rice, wandered back inland with their carrying-poles, looking for more pigs to conquer. No, I slander that great Chinese animal. He is never conquered. Even when he is dead and eaten he often wreaks dire vengeance on his two-legged foes, and when it comes to going to his fate by himself—he rides in more or less state, but he never walks. His Chinese Majesty the pig simply declines to transport himself to market, thereby not only showing more hog sense than most domestic animals and no small percentage of mankind but getting a certain revenge by forcing upon the coolies of China more hard labor than is spent in any single occupation in our own land. The Chinese have endless patience, but not enough to drive a pig to market. If Mr. Pig is large, he must be carried between two men, or two women, or any other combination of shoulders. Little Chinese pigs go to market, though not without audible protests, by twos on the ends of a single shoulder-pole. But the pig that is not large enough to require two carriers, nor small enough to go in pairs with one, is a serious problem indeed. For the general run of Chinese coolies cannot carry a load unless it is so divided that there are equal parts of it at either end of his pole, and thus to divide a pig

so long before he reaches the consumption stage would be, in southern China—well, let us be conservative and say unwise. So it not infrequently happens that a pig requires two valets when he is scarcely worthy of one. Sometimes the coolies manage to carry two in the center of a single bamboo, but there are vociferous protests to that, for unlike the race he does so much to nourish, the pig is only to a limited degree gregarious. Normally either one man carries two pigs or two men carry one; there seems to be no middle ground, and at certain weights pigs are virtually untransportable. So on the whole it is best to send piggy to market when he is small enough to go in pairs, for he may never grow large enough to be worth sending alone. Of course the coolie can put some other cargo, or a stone, or some one else's or his own child on the other end of his pole as a counterbalance, but, don't you see, even then piggy must not weigh more than half as much as the carrier can carry? All in all the pig-gishness of the hog or the hoggishness of the pig, whichever way you prefer to look at it, gives the Chinese a vast amount of trouble, and Hainan has more than its full share of it. For the pig is the real measuring-rod, the standard of currency, in China's island south of the sea, as every foreign passenger on every steamer passing Hoi-how east-bound learns to his sorrow; the Chinese, of course, being fortified by centuries of endurance, do not mind such company.

So constant was the demand for pig-carriers that we could not get any one to take up my light and more savory baggage, so that the good-natured old mission servant went on with me. Frogs were singing in the rice-fields of the somewhat rolling country, little suspecting that they are another export of Hainan, and a favorite food on the island. An east wind brought the smell of the near-by sea. Hainan has southwesterly monsoons in "winter," as the months around New Year's are erroneously called, and from the northeast in "summer," now arriving with early March. The walking was excellent, even after we fell in with what is some day to be an automobile road of boulevard width which a young official of Kachek district was pushing portward. By an oversight on my part we went on into the dusk and then into the night, and as there were graves all about us, with fireflies that might have been mistaken for the discontented spirits of the buried flickering about among them, it was a wonder that my semi-carrier—by this time I had assumed nearly half the load myself—did not take to his heels. Perhaps that might have been worse than sticking to me; besides, he had been many

years with missionaries, and he had only one eye anyway, so that possibly he did not see as many evil spirits as the average coolie would have seen. At any rate, though his old strength gave out, his cheerfulness did not, and with the lantern he had brought along he managed to shuffle on.

Well after nightfall we stumbled through tunnels in greenery, narrow and weird in the night, into a typical little village called Kating. The place became lively enough when a foreigner turned up; probably never in the history of Kating had one come on foot, at least at such an hour. The entire village, even the women, more or less in the background, the children in front between my knees and those of the no less childlike adults, crowded as closely about me as the laws of physics permitted, fingering even the food from my bag as my guide-carrier warmed it up inside the shop under conditions best not too closely investigated and set it before me on the outdoor table under a porch roof. I recalled with amusement the popular Western notions of the Chinese. Here I was entirely alone, late on a dark night, in a chance village of what could easily be imagined the most dangerous region of a most isolated part of China,—indeed robbers and bandits are anything but rare in this section—completely surrounded by those dreaded Celestials of our "movies" and popular novels—furtive, murderous beings in gaudy dens, with a knife in one hand and a poison phial in the other—and I was in just about as much danger, if I took care to sidetrack the germs that were unconsciously passed on to me, as I would be in the movie-house watching such a picture—and in company much more cheerful. By all the rules of those same masterpieces I should have been subtly murdered during the night for my foolhardiness in putting up cot and mosquito-net under the same overhanging eaves, virtually out in the single village street itself, to the never-ending astonishment of the villagers. But I am forced to report nothing worse than a sleep badly broken by the more curious, who did not cease their investigating until the dogs began barking for the night, by much talking in the peculiarly raucous voices of the Chinese masses, a lot of coughing, and now and then a squalling baby. Ah, that I had a novelist's imagination, or a conscience that would not wince at drawing a long bow; how dramatic, how "sensational," how newspaper-like I could make hundreds of my nights in China!

The last half of the night was no better than the first, for afraid as they are of the early hours of darkness, the Chinese seem to have

no fear of the latter end of it, so that as usual a party or two set out long before daylight; about that time pigs began to forage under my cot where it was too low for them, and while the curs, several to every hovel in the village, if my ears did not deceive me, tired of their night's vocal toil, lay down on the first convenient garbage-heap for a nap before taking up their daily round in search of edible offal, life began again in earnest throughout the town. My companion had found a coolie to take his job and started homeward wreathed in smiles at the silver dollar wrapped in one of his gnarled old fists. From the sandy little path closely squeezed between half-tropical hedges which succeeded the village street we came out upon the wide automobile road again, still a road only in theory, for it was as ineffectual as many things in China, as useless as if it had never been built, because no bridges had been thrown across the ravines and streams along the way. The road was grass-grown now, little more than a wide cleared space, perfect for walking and coolie trotting, very straight for China, except where the hills forced curves, but with paths wandering back and forth along it, as winding as they could be and still stick to the embryo highway; for like their South American prototypes who make the similar *caminos reales* of the Andes, neither the Chinese nor their domestic animals can go a yard, mentally or physically, in a straight line. The terraced, half-tropical country took on a hint of the Philippines, reminding me that Manila was not far away, almost due eastward. Long trains of coolies jogged for ever and ever portward with many of the products of the island, the women dressed and carrying so nearly like the men that they stood out no more from the long files than does a box-car with slightly different lettering from our own freight-trains.

Though the coolie carrier is much more in vogue, there are wheeled vehicles also on the island. I passed once on this tramp the heaviest and crudest cart known to vehicledom, its solid but by no means circular wooden wheels suggesting that the disk- or artillery-wheel of our automobile-makers is not so new and original an idea as they think. Drawn by four water-buffaloes and driven by a small boy, it moved at about two miles an hour, and all five of them were unable to keep the contraption within the wide new roadway. These shrieking carts are more common on the western side of the island, especially about Nodoa, where there are many Hakkas. But lest pride sag China's southernmost possession westward let me hasten to add that there were already two Ford motor-buses on the first part of this newly opened road out of Kachek, thanks to the progressive

young official who had lived two years in Japan. I had been promised that one of them would pick me up at Uidiok, where we took refuge from the half-high sun in a mission chapel that had little else than shade to offer; but the whole town assured me that they were both out of order and would not come to-day, which was so exactly in keeping with my fears, suspicions, and habitual luck that we trotted on.

Traveling coolies carried a little slice of fat pork dangling by a vegetable string, in a sunshine that should have cooked it, and many bore in addition to their professional burdens a heavy string or two of "cash" with which to buy such things in the markets along the way. We came upon several of these market-towns, some of them in full market-day swing, some of them dead with the inertia of other days. Chinese markets are known as "one-four-seven, "two-five-eight," and the like, according to the days of each moon on which they operate, and it would be hard to imagine a greater contrast than between the sleepy silence and apathy, the lack of people and the utter indifference of those who live there permanently to the selling of even the little stock they may have carried over, and these market-towns on surging, chaotic, impassable market-day, a difference as great as between a cemetery and a championship-day football field. From the wide open road we now and then came suddenly into a stone-paved street hardly six feet wide, packed with a Chinese mob through which we could only worm our way as a grub might through an earth-packed water-pipe, the same types as everywhere, including our own land—the village smarty, the village butt, the timid, the modest, the bold and the stupid, a few of the more forward girls on the edge of the crowd which doubled in density, impossible as that seemed, around the red-faced foreigner.

Hainan showed more fear of photography than I had ordinarily found in China. An old woman with bound feet, somehow recognizing the nefarious instrument I pointed at her, fell off a water-buffalo on which she had been dozing, and disappeared, for all her infirmities, with the agility of a cat. News of the danger from which she ran seemed to spread in a flash, as if by telepathy, to other women and girls and boys on grazing buffaloes, and they scampered away in veritable flocks over the rolling landscape for long distances ahead of me as I advanced, lest I carry off their souls in my wicked little machine. For the chief rural sport among the boys and even girls, sometimes the women, of Hainan, as of most of southern China, is riding water-buffaloes, or at least reclining on them as they graze.

The rump or the shoulder of the beast makes as good a pillow as his back does a couch for those accustomed from babyhood to narrow and hard beds, and while he grazes along the narrow dikes between the paddy-fields those whose duty it is to keep him out of the crops sleep on him in the sunshine under their great hats, to which when it rains they sometimes add palm-leaf rain-coats.

A glance at a map of the world may suggest that Hainan is only a tiny speck of an island, but when it takes two days of hard travel, by motor-boat and afoot, to reach a town by no means in the center of it, weary legs begin to give one another notion of its size. The Kachek region was much more tropical, in appearance if not in climate, than Hoihow. Cocoanut groves, thatched huts, a humid something in the air carried the mind back to the real tropics, though still, thanks perhaps to the sea-breeze, the heat was not unendurable; and looking across one of these great valleys of palm vistas and rice-fields, one understood better than on the north coast why its foreign residents fondly call Hainan the "Isle of Palms."

Uidiok had been mistaken about the autobuses, for one of them bounced past us toward that northern end of its run when we were barely half-way to its southern destination, the driver and his inevitable assistant, with one lone passenger bumping about in one of the two long seats behind them, peering at me curiously, possibly a bit scornfully—or was it resentfully, that of all people the foreigners who had invented the contrivance did not patronize it? We were within sight of Kachek when it dashed back past us, with a flick of its tail as much as to say that if I had scorned to wait for it I might finish the last couple of miles without its assistance whether I wished to or not. But who could have been sure that it would return? Near the town there seemed to be some chair-carrying, though I had been assured that if the "spirit-wagon" did not run there was no other form of transportation than my own feet. I met such a chair just as I was crossing the little old stone bridge into Kachek, a single carrier walking inside it, like a stage hobby-horse, for when Chinese chairmen lack clients one of them often rides back to the starting-point alone—on his own varicose veins, sometimes in great knots in his calves that a mere scratch may turn into permanent running sores—while the other celebrates his temporary freedom.

By dark I had enjoyed the luxury of a hot bath in a real tub and sat down to dinner with my own countrymen in a most delightful

corner of the world. Cocoonut-palms swaying in the constant monsoon across great vistas like a famous valley in Santo Domingo were much in evidence in the beautiful and fertile basin of Kachek, the only place I ever saw in China that looked unequivocally tropical. The two men and several women missionaries, Americans all, not to mention half a dozen children, made Kachek the southernmost foreign residence in China, now that the lone customs man once stationed at the southern end of the island had been rescued from madness and brought back to Hoihow.

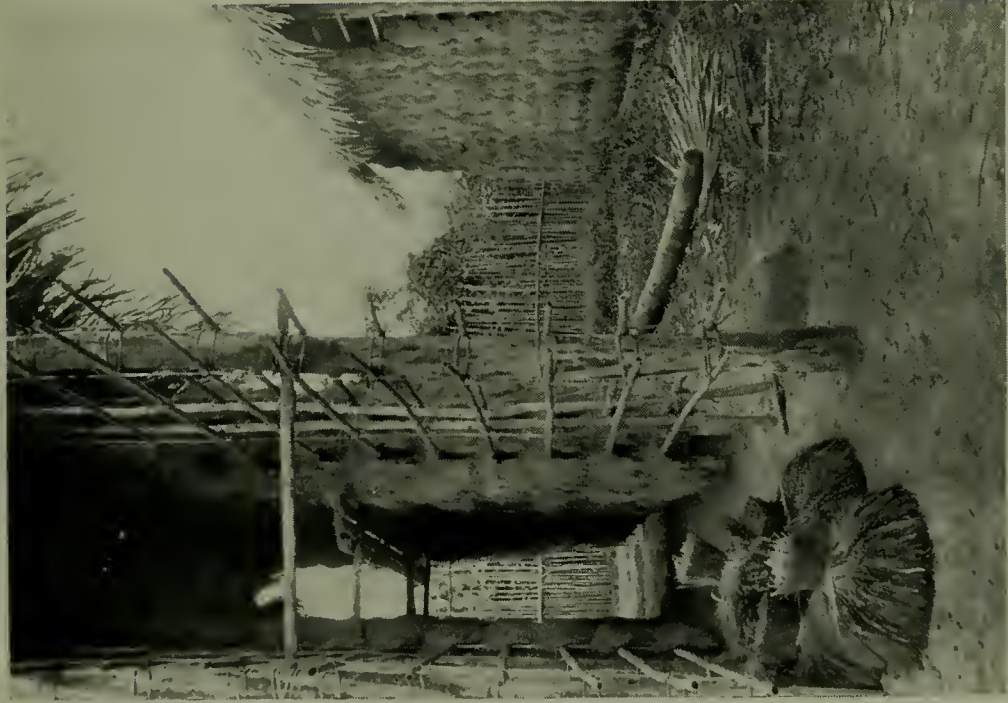
I had arrived luckily, for Kachek was *en fête*. Outdoor theatrical performances, with improvised stages and seats, were in full swing between the mission compound and the crowded native town. Perhaps it is because an actor ranks low in the Chinese social scale that there were many grins but no protests when I not only mounted the seats to photograph the stage but the stage to photograph the audience, thereby hogging the lime-light. But Chinese actors should be used to interruptions; musicians, property-men, and many of the audience, especially of the small boy variety, roamed almost at will about the stage, occupying every available space and more, all but getting under the feet of the unbathed coolies decked out in filthy finery who ranted and declaimed and strutted the creaking boards, distant relatives indeed of the peerless Mei Lan-fang. But your Chinese audience has a real imagination—and no curtain-calls. Nor were they needed here, for in these enviable theaters out in the brilliant sunshine and the constant breeze the dressing-room was only the back half of the makeshift stage, by no means shut off by a scanty blowing curtain, and as public as the stage itself, so that auditors enamoured of a player—were such a thing possible—had only to wander around to the rear and watch him redecorate his simple coolie face with some new deviltry, and small boys who must see their heroes—or heroines, here of course of the hirsute sex—disrobe had no need to risk their eyes at peep-holes scraped in painted windows by confederates. The tops of grave-mounds, too, made as good points of vantage as the rows of boards laid on sawhorses before the stage, for short of removing them the Chinese have no more reverence, as the West understands that word, for the resting-places of their unlimited ancestors in their unlimited graveyards than they have unkindness toward those unable to pay an admission fee to such theaters.

Hawkers of anything by any stretch of a catholic appetite edible

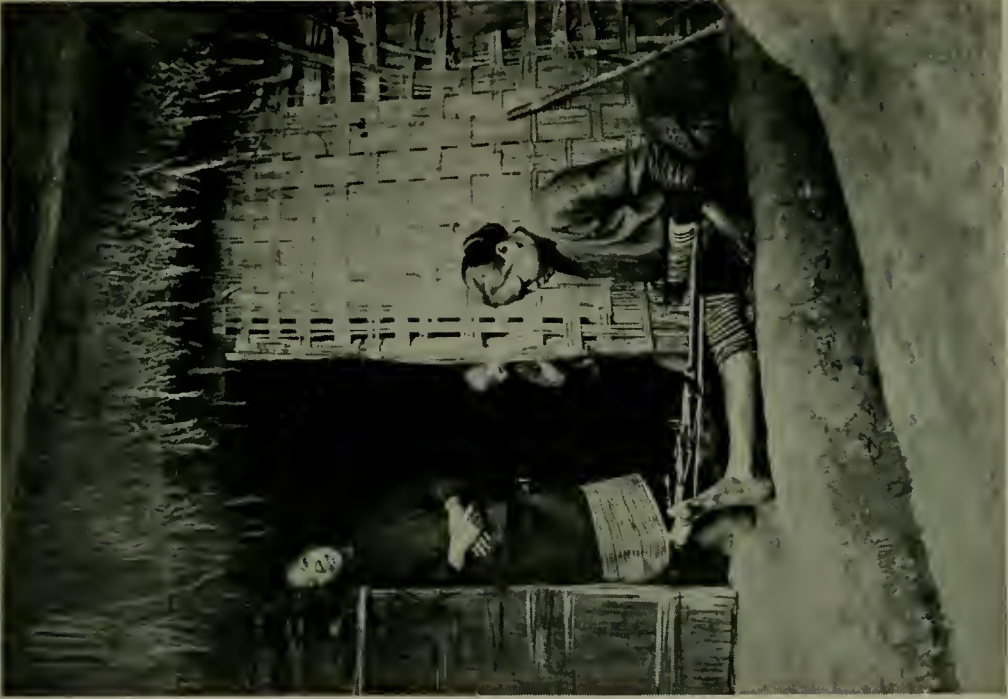
or drinkable drowned out most of the actors' lines, a feat in itself; wandering barbers, their shops on their shoulders or a client in the throes of a general renovation; fortune-tellers, side-shows, confidence men—there was even taffy-pulling from unwashed hooks by never-washed hands. Scores of gambling-tables in mat-sheds thrown up for the occasion operated as openly as the theaters; half-shelters of reed mats and anything else that could temper the ardent sunshine hung outside these, offering less aristocratic games of chance; a kind of curb-market gambling without covering stretched hither and yon; even the man with a fortune under one of two half-nutshells was not missing. Girls and boys of five gambling in the streets or in the booths were no new sight to the man familiar with southern China. Coolies naked to the waist, the red calloused line of the carrying-pole across the base of the neck, not a few with open saddle-sores there, wandered in and out of the throngs, some with their worldly wealth in two or three strings of "cash," weighing eight pounds and worth an American quarter each, over their shoulders.

Most of the naked-to-the-waist men of the town wore the diamond-shaped stomacher, preferably in bright red, common in all southern China, akin to the "cholera-band" with which not a few foreigners make themselves miserable in the tropics and due to the same superstition. A locally made and gaily decorated leather wallet, attached to the belt at the pit of the stomach, took the place of pockets for possessions more valuable than "cash." The countrywomen wore well-woven hats of immense dimensions above their sleek black blouses and trousers. Hat-pins seemed in order with the monsoon blowing, but either this forgotten nicety of the West had not yet reached Kachek or the festively dressed ladies preferred to cling to their umbrella-hats with both hands—or with one, since their trousers seemed frequently to demand the other. As they moved, their full breasts undulated under the black blouses of patent-leather or oil-cloth texture, and here and there in half-concealed corners they served offspring already fluent of tongue and legs with no half-soured contents of a thermos bottle. The more flapper-like girls of the town sported the stiff straw hats that we allow the male only. Now and then a small boy, but rarely a man, bore about like a tray on his head this awkward and unsightly head-gear, which seemed to have been copied from the silly West by way of Japan. There were many bare feet that had been unbound, but I saw no young girls with bound feet. School-boys played a kind of football-tennis over a makeshift net un-





The Loi cut their rice high, tie it in short bundles, and hang it up to dry on racks covered by little thatch roofs



The Loi women have a method all their own for weaving their distinctive garments



Riding water-buffaloes where they may graze without intruding upon the crops is one of the chief pastimes of the boys and sometimes the girls of southern China



In the region of the coastal Loi of Hainan all villages and many estates have great gateways made of the lava-stone with which the district is overrun

der a bearded old banian-tree, just such a game as I had seen a score of years before between urchins and novices in Buddhist monastery grounds in Burma. Down at the end of the town, through narrow, dodging streets of many trades, past the shady corner of a temple here and there, rowboat-ferries plied frequently across the swift river on which Kachek is built, boatmen carrying ashore in their arms or on their backs women passengers of such high class as not to be barefoot, though by strict rules of Chinese etiquette this is unseemly even in cases of absolute necessity. Just across the road from the mission compound a man was prepared to serve barbecued dog on short notice. He sat on the ground before a hole he had dug in it, tufts of yellowish hair about him showing that he had already administered to the hunger of no small number of clients, and called the attention of those who passed to another cur, just an ordinary mangy, diseased, yellow town scavenger, with its throat already cut, awaiting in the hole the word of a customer to start the fire—dog to order, a sad end even for a dog's life.

The American missionaries of Kachek prided themselves not only on being the southernmost foreigners in China but on having the only unwall'd compound. A fine democratic idea, no doubt, though it had its drawbacks. Crowds from the market-day festival wandered across the grassy lawns, marveling at these and the palaces the mission buildings seemed to them; a group of village women peered in at every window while we ate, and at most other times, to see whatever strange tricks these strange beings from another world might be doing. Fortunately most Chinese cannot see through glass, almost unknown outside treaty-ports and mission compounds. Their unaccustomed eyes focus on the window like a photographer's on his ground-glass, and those of many a missionary's house serve as mirrors to simple countrymen and women, who stand combing out their long tresses quite unconscious of the inmates gazing at them from the inside. The mission women of Kachek were constantly being timidly importuned to let the women go through the house, and as their work benefited by every chance to make friends they often succumbed. There being no private rooms in the average Chinese house, the naïve masses of China can hardly be expected to respect any private room there may be in a foreigner's. I have yet to hear of a Chinese "boy" successfully taught to knock at a door, even of a lady's boudoir, before he enters. But the missionaries of Kachek would have done better perhaps to have been more exclusive in their

democracy, to have followed the rule all but universal among foreigners throughout China and shut off their compound from the public, for only a few weeks after I left him my host of Kachek was killed by bandits at his own door, leaving not only a good work but a wife and four small children.

A few of these immature rowdies in ragged semi-uniform commonly miscalled soldiers of China were loafing and gambling about Kachek, but I saw none at all in Hainan compared with Canton and many another place on the mainland. It seems there were plenty, but most of them were up country fighting the bandits, for robbery and brigandage were rampant in many parts of the island. That soldiers and outlaws sometimes actually came to blows was affirmed by the arrival during my stay of a young man shot through the thigh, an officer for all his scantiness of uniform, as the fact that a chair and carriers had been provided him indicated. In all probability he was no friend of foreigners, but that had not made him hesitate to race to the mission hospital for help when the incredible happened and he was wounded. It would not have seemed strange to a wandering layman if the mission doctor—American-born and university-graduated son, by the way, of a former Russian Jewish rabbi converted to Presbyterianism, with a wife of Scottish ancestry—had questioned his moral right to treat the fellow, not because of his probable antipathy to foreigners, but because the more medical assistance the missionaries offer the more fighting there is likely to be in China's myriad and endless civil wars—but then, much the same thing could be said of our Red Cross subscriptions.

My host and I set out on horseback one morning for a plain some miles out of town, where a field-day sponsored by the enterprising young official ruling Kachek district has brought together most of the school-boys and much of the population of the region. At one end of the long field, on a raised roofed platform of bamboo and matting, sat the district leader himself, in a frock-coat, for all the tropical heat, that marked in a flash his Japanese training. A score of his soldiers, badly uniformed but heavily armed, eyed us even after their chief had invited us to seats up the makeshift ladder beside him, as if trying to impress upon us that they would protect their commander even to the extent of shooting such privileged beings as foreigners if we dared attack him. This was the young man who had made his interior district more progressive than the port

itself, tearing down or remodeling temples to make good modern schools—at least in so far as buildings go—building the thirty-foot boulevard from his capital across his district and on into a neighboring one burdened with no such progressive ideas. He had visions of making Kachek the chief town of the island by connecting it with a good harbor to the east, a natural development, since goods from and to the interior habitually pass through Kachek "market." But like the few other would-be reformers of China he got only open or secret opposition, and had to keep a body-guard about him day and night to escape assassination for collecting so many taxes for his new and, to the people of his district, entirely unnecessary improvements. Moreover, born in a near-by village, he was a home-town boy whom no one took as seriously as they would have some one from far away; it was much as if one of our street-corner loafers had gone away for a couple of years and come back to tell the old town how it should comport itself, taking command of the place when it refused to listen and forcing a bit of progress upon it. The few wise enough to have been encouraging spent their wits in taking advantage of the situation to fill their pockets. Fellow-countrymen he had trusted had sold him half a dozen third-class Fords of about the vintage of 1901 that had already run their lungs out in Singapore, at a price notably higher than, had he had time to look into the matter himself, new Fords could probably have been set down on the island. With them had come Chinese chauffeurs speaking a little English and knowing even less about automobiles, so that both they and the machines were much more often seen in the repair-shop at the terminal station than on the road. So little could he trust his own people that he had induced the mission doctor, architect of the new church in his spare hours, to build him a bridge badly needed, the doctor's estimate of the cost being about one third what the ruler's own people were demanding.

Pushing on two or three days from Kachek one comes to the Five Finger range of mountains, passing first through the country of the Miao, by all available evidence later comers than the perhaps aboriginal tribes of the real interior. The Miao clear off the foot-hills of the mountains by burning, plant their crops, and after a few years of unfertilized soil exhaustion move on and do the same thing again elsewhere. In this and many other respects they are the antithesis of the Celestials. It seems there is an old treaty between the Miao and the Chinese agreeing that they shall not be compelled to live with or

marry among the Chinese, so long as they pay tribute, but that they must live at least three feet above the water, so that the Chinese shall be free to plant rice. The Miao themselves grow upland or dry-land rice, Indian corn and the like; they claim always to have had the popcorn with which they surprise their rare foreign visitors. The language of the Hainan Miao seems to be made up of about equal mixtures of the aboriginal, the mandarin, and the Cantonese tongues. Unlike the Chinese they are musical in the Western sense of the word, and intelligent, but cease development at twelve or fourteen, though they are more eager to learn and less illiterate than the more aboriginal tribe. They call their children by numbers or by such names as "Bad Dog," "Dirty Goat," evidently to confound the spirits, much as our wealthy might, if they were as wise, dress their children in overalls to foil kidnappers.

The Miao live more or less intermingled with, yet distinct from, the most aboriginal race of Hainan, which the Chinese call the Loi. Little or nothing is known of the history of this primitive people. They have no written language, no records mentioning them exist, and they are so reticent that very little has been learned even of their traditions. Though they claim and are commonly accepted to be aborigines, other tribes may have preceded them. The Miao seem to have come to Hainan only a few generations ago, but the Loi are apparently a mystery even to themselves. They largely rule themselves in their mountain fastnesses, having a kind of communism, by families, under a selfish chief. They are commonly called "wild" in the interior and "tame" where, nearer the coasts, they are mixed with the Chinese, but though they are not very hospitable, even those of the mountains are not wild after the manner of the head-hunting aborigines of neighboring Formosa. Once a foreigner gets among the "wild" Loi of the Five Finger range, the highest peak of which is six or seven thousand feet above the sea that, could any one get there, would probably be seen in every direction from its top on a clear day, he is quite safe, so far as human violence is concerned, which was far more than could be said of the cordon of Chinese banditry now surrounding the "wild" district.

The Loi are more lithe and supple than the Chinese; the eyes are blacker and the nose sharper, giving the face a keener look. There are many tribes among them, differing in language, though all Loi men and many women can speak "Hainanese." Many of their dialects are closely related to those of French Indo-China and Malaysia.

The men now generally dress like the Chinese, and many shave their heads, but some tribes are recognizable by different loin-cloths and still more easily by their style of hair-dress. The men of a tribe known to Chinese and missionaries as the "Big Knots," living toward the northeast in the district of Deng-ang and wearing few clothes, comb the long hair of their unshaven heads up over the forehead, where it is ingeniously tied in a knot on the side of the head, giving them a decidedly jaunty appearance. The women wear many silver and brass ornaments, and in one tribe they have ear-rings so large that they have to tie them up over their heads when at work. They have a method all their own of weaving their garments, the patterns of the richly colored embroidery on the jackets and skirts distinguishing some tribes. Some wear cylindrical skirts too narrow for comfortable walking; but among most tribes the skirt reaches little below the knee and in some it comes barely half-way down the thigh, proper enough for comely young girls with attractive legs but an indecent custom for haggard old women.

The chief gift of the Loi to the outside world is ratan, the inner part of a jungle plant bristling with thorns like long sharp hooks, which the "wild" Loi exchange with Chinese and Hakka traders for the imports that tempt them to gather it. Their cattle roam wild and are often stolen. Living at the foot of great ranges all but the thickly wooded tops of which are denuded of forest, they are a bit more permanent in their agricultural methods than the Miao. They are true savages, in that the women do all the work except the heating of the ground and leveling by hand which take the place of plowing. After burning off a strip to be used for dry-land rice or corn, the men drive their water-buffaloes or other animals round and round in this until even the stoniest ground becomes a quagmire, then leave the women to plant, tend, and gather the crops. Having plenty of fire-wood and needing no hats, they have little use for their rice-straw, and cut off little more than the heads of the rice, which they hang heads down in bundles along a kind of bamboo latticework under long narrow roofs. On the whole they lead a hand-to-mouth, happy-go-lucky existence, threshing and hulling their rice meal by meal as they need it. Being improvident, they have frequent rice famines, from which the shrewd Hakka traders profit doubly because rice is not only required for eating but still more for making home-brew, a kind of wine or whisky which the Loi, unlike civilized communities, must have at any price. Sometimes they must cut their rice green

or starve, perhaps even go thirsty. Their huts have ratan or split-bamboo floors a foot or more above the ground, their pigs and dogs under rather than upon it, at least one improvement over the Chinese. The floor serves as bed and three stones in the center of the room as kitchen. Each hut of their clusters thereof has a permanent granary for storing rice, when there is any, squatty cat- and rat-proof structures a little above the ground also, and every home has a trellis covered with luxurious vines of the pumpkin family. Tobacco, of which they smoke the natural leaf, is their main garden stuff; they raise cassava, caraway, lettuce, peppers, and a legume similar to indigo with which to make their blue dye. As wild animals and birds menace their gardens, they build bamboo fences and in lieu of scarecrows use a curious device so balanced that the water of a small stream causes it to tip and empty, striking a stone as it falls.

At home there is a table for the family idol, but the family itself eats squatted on the floor about the cooking-pot. They use bowls and chop-sticks unless they are traveling or out in the fields, when they carry cooked rice in convenient balls. The adults are scrawny; coughs and colds are universal, as among so many peoples living "close to nature"; trachoma and hook-worm are wide-spread; no one is entirely free from disease, malaria being perhaps their worst enemy, as the leeches that infest their damp mountainous habitat are to the foreigners who now and then go among them. Yet they are so superstitious that effective treatment is almost impossible. Their religion is a kind of devil-worship mixed with sundry Chinese superstitions, but they are so fond of music that their marriage ceremony includes a night-long singsong by bride and groom and their most intimate friends, and the men carry a kind of jews'-harp with which to pass their many leisure moments, while the busy women are reduced to beating a tattoo with their wooden pestles as they hull their rice in wooden mortars. A bamboo flute blown with the nose, faint and melodious, rounds out their musical apparatus, and they sing together as they work in groups.

There was the same endless string of human pack-animals in blue loin-cloth-like pants, parasol hats, straw sandals, and almost chocolate-brown skins along the road as I made my way back to the coast. The markets that were so teeming when I came were as dead now as the Latin language, and others that had been as dead were now boiling with bartering humanity. Yellow-brown members of the cur family



roamed the fields like friendless semi-wolves, seeking what they might devour and apparently somewhat aware that they are often devoured themselves by a people on the whole indifferent to their form of nourishment. The autobus which I had again been assured would not run that day hopped past me in the middle of the morning, this time quite useless to me. For a kind American missionary lady of Kachek, though holding cigars in abhorrence, had insisted that I ride her horse back to the coast through a region inhabited by another tribe of Loi. The carrier engaged for me promptly turned lame and farmed out his job to a younger man no doubt at a fraction of what he had forced me to pay him, and strolled along unburdened, acting merely as *mafu* and chief spokesman, though taking all the credit of being the servant and protector of the supposedly helpless foreigner. We slept in the church at Uidiok and swung off next afternoon beyond the picturesque old bridge of the main trail, to spend the second night in another mud den called a chapel in the walled "city" of Deng-ang. This had so often been looted that it was little more than a wilderness inside a wall, which no doubt was just, for according to the missionaries of Kachek it is a most immoral and wicked place—but then, so they consider Boston, to say nothing of New York.

Thanks partly to the dirty young Chinese and his no less soap-abhorring wife and very vocal baby who occupied an adjoining mud cell that seemed to be the pastor's study, I was up at four in the chapel where I had spread my cot among makeshift benches scattered about the earth floor. There is no keeping Chinese Christians and their friends from using churches as lodgings or granaries or anything else for which they use their temples, up to the slaughtering of pigs and the stabling of horses. The splendid weather with which Hainan had favored me had turned hazy and dull and then windy the afternoon before, and now I was startled to find it raining. For I was hurrying back to Hoihow to board a steamer carrying my family from Canton to Indo-China, and the time was so short that the loss of a day, perhaps of half a day, might leave us separated for a long time, especially as they were carrying the family passport. Though I had announced that we would start at dawn, rain or shine, I was only outwardly surprised to find my lame supernumerary and the carrier still stretched out on a wooden bed in another part of the chapel premises. To my natural query they replied with the most ingenuous voices at their command, "But, *Hsien-sheng*, it is *raining!*" A few curt words confirmed my statement of the night before, and

within an hour we were off. Nearly another hour was lost on the bank of the river because the ferryman was on the other side and did not like to expose his single much-patched blouse to the rain; then as this increased and soaked us through and through and we sprawled and slid and floundered across what looked like very fertile rice-fields along such meandering trails that the lame captain of industry who posed as guide lost us several times, I was constantly expecting the men to go on strike.

At noon we reached another shed posing as a chapel at a town shaped like a Greek cross on the edge of the coastal or "tame" Loi country, the two streets packed to overflowing with market-day in spite of the mud and the rain. Though these tribes of the aborigines are much mixed with the Chinese, it was plain from their blue-black liquid eyes, with that something about them that distinguishes wild from domesticated animals, that they were still a slightly wilder people, a timid people, afraid of a camera yet hastening to obey a commanding voice. After a fagot-heated lunch in the "chapel" we plodded on, now by a very slippery stone road through Stoneland. For this country of the coastal Loi is a wildish region of gray porous lava-stone of which everything is made—houses, temples, roads, graves, villages. At the foot of almost every large tree was an artistic miniature temple or shrine, most of them with stone pillars like little parthenons; stout stone walls lined the stone trail; not merely were there many stone-walled fields, which certainly is un-Chinese, but great stone walls about every little garden. It was as if, being near a former volcano that had left the country buried under a deep covering of lava turned to stone, they used this troublesome material in every possible way to clear their fields of it, since they could not burn or otherwise destroy it. No doubt it is due to the terrible stoniness of this region that the Chinese have left it, so near the coast, to the Loi. Their dead were buried in round or rectangular mounds of cut stone, waist-high or more above the ground, looking almost like granite, some with a single hibiscus flower on the almost flat earth top, some completely covered with broken stone, some with joss-paper and joss-sticks bearing testimony to Chinese influence. On the headstones were Chinese characters cut and outlined in red paint, and above them queer crude figures in the same color. There were stone-faced terraces and big stone water-holes with stone stairs down into them; and, most striking of all, big granite-like gateways without gates, most of them square, some rounded, all very massive, ten feet or more high and several feet

through, stood before every village and nearly every estate, like primitive arches of triumph. The imagination shuddered to think how many man-power of stonework had been spent on the overabundant material of this forbidding region.

Yet the inhabitants seemed to worship the stones and rocks that had given them so much trouble. Crude stone gods were set up on all the prominent boulders; heaps of stones with joss-paper fluttering from them were thrown on the tops of these and other rocks; crude representations of the female organ were laboriously cut in the surface of the stones everywhere, on rocks and boulders, every few steps in the flagstones underfoot, so numerous that with the hard work implied they must have been due to a real cult and not to mere obscenity.

Through this rocky, prickly-forested woodland of endless stone graves we plodded and slipped all the afternoon. Bamboo poles with a tuft of leaves left at the top stood before each house, where they had been set up at the lunar New Year, as I was to learn later is the custom in neighboring Annam. Masses of broken pottery lay here and there, due perhaps merely to great pottery kilns of the kind I had glimpsed in rows along the high banks on my motor-boat journey up the river, though the way they were broken in great heaps suggested some sort of rite. At other places there were piles of tiny snail-shells. There was considerable upland rice, but none of the variety which requires flooding, jackfruit here and there on the trunks of big trees, a kind of cactus and huge coarse wild pineapple on small trees, thistles and all manner of thorny vegetation, plants like currant-bushes or fields of waist-high switches that seemed to be indigo—on the whole decidedly a wild man's land.

It was still raining when we floundered past Kiungchow into the road along which Fords and rattletrap carriages were still splashing back and forth between the capital and the chief port, though on so miserable a day underfoot and overhead wheelbarrows seemed to have laid up and there were no other coolie carriers than my own. At dusk I brought up at the broad grassy missionary compound, a bath and civilization, and the more or less good news that the Japanese steamer on which my family was to have embarked had not yet put in an appearance—good if it had not passed Hoihow without me, bad if this weather meant a typhoon at sea.

Fortunately the customs officers and my host were on friendly terms, so that they promised to notify me when the ship came in and, if I used reasonable speed, not to let it proceed without me; for many

a man has waited ten days in Hoihow for a boat and then missed it because he went up town to buy a souvenir trinket. The craft was suddenly announced at noon, just in time to make me miss lunch at both ends, though only men long trained to peer through the fog with glasses could have known that it was not a cloud but a boat, much less the particular boat in question. But they were right, and before the afternoon was gone we were sailing away on the *Taikwa Maru*, not everything perhaps that a passenger steamer should be, but spick and span and orderly and well officered indeed compared to the *Yue Ping Wa*.

Next morning we drifted into the harbor of Pakhoi on the mainland and lay there half a deeply dull Sunday. In Manchu days Kwangtung and Kwangsi Provinces were both under the same viceroy, which is probably the reason that Pakhoi is still in Kwangtung and that Kwangsi is as landlocked as Bolivia, for Canton evidently took advantage of its position as viceregal capital to grab all the sea-coast, so that its province stretches in a long narrow strip all the way to Indo-China. Curious, half-length boats, which looked as if the town had in a burst of economy cut all its boats in two and boarded each half across the back that had been the midships, came out a long distance into the open roadstead for passengers and baggage, even for freight. Mother and I were rowed ashore by a sturdy old lady who looked at least as full of years as the one of us she carried ashore pickaback, landing us on a long stretch of sand in front of many rows of huts and houses built up on stilts well above high tide. The westernmost treaty-port on the coast of China was a long narrow town soon dying out in fields at the back and both ends of the two or three long, slim, slimy streets paralleling the sea-front, but with cheerful and at least outwardly friendly inhabitants, about equally Cantonese and Hakkas. It was the women of the latter apparently who wore even on dull and rainy days a head-gear that reminded one of the veiled women of Mohammedan countries, a finely woven, flat, wide-brimmed hat-sunshade with a hole in the top and cloth as black as widows' weeds hanging down a foot or more all around it. The local military dictator was threatening to build an automobile road to somewhere or other, and there was already the beginning of one on which the rickshaws that cannot make their way in the town itself could ply their trade in the outskirts. Long lines of them were waiting in the hope that some one might want to go somewhere, but it was not very clear

where one could go, except back to the ship by the same stout-backed old boat-woman.

Hoihow and Pakhoi are not very exciting ports west-bound; one must travel eastward to get their real color. For then every ship of whatever nationality puts in at these ports to load pigs, hoisted on board a dozen or so at a time by the ship's winches, in the same with cages in which they are carried from inland by sweating coolies. They are piled like cord-wood on the open deck, fore and aft of the tiny cluster of allegedly first-class cabins, six, sometimes eight layers deep, so that when a typhoon catches one of these craft at sea the ocean for leagues around is covered with drowned pigs, still in their imprisoning with traps, and passengers give due thanks for the storm which, though it may have come near sending them to the locker-room of Davy Jones, has left the air breathable. Probably the meanest of all the many mean tricks I played upon my family during our Chinese travels was sending them back from the southwesternmost province to Hong Kong by sea while I tramped my way comfortably overland to rejoin them. For though it was their good luck not to have their steamer proceed from Haiphong to the coal-mines of Hongay and bury them in coal-dust on a sweltering day, the second morning found her loading hogs at Pakhoi, later at Hoihow, baskets of chickens, ducks, and pigeons piled on top of the stacked pigs, so that they were completely walled in by a crowing, quacking, grunting, and above all pig-stenching cargo with very narrow alleyways between them. Owners or agents of the fowls accompanied and tried to water and even to feed them, but the hogs stacked layer after layer one on top of the other were without even water all the three or four of the five days the steamer dawdled, as they all do, from Haiphong to Hong Kong.

The westward trip is swifter, being pigless, and we woke on the second morning out of Hoihow to find the coast of Indo-China in sight, and by ten we had passed the easy formalities for mere travelers and were installed in Parisian comfort ashore. One of our fellow-passengers was not so lucky. He was a Russian of the educated class, who had tried to finish a medical education in Peking, then in other cities, only to be driven out of each place by Bolshevik influence. Finally he decided, since he knew a bit of French and neither of the two languages useful throughout China, that he would go to Indo-China and enter the medical school of Hanoi. Having little money and no passport, he set out to walk there from Canton; but he seemed

to have no tramper's instinct or luck, was captured by pirates on that long neck of land running out into the sea almost to Hainan, eventually convinced them that he was merely a destitute *Ugh-kuo-ren* rather than one of those other races of foreigners who are always rich, and was turned loose—kicked out might be a better expression. He managed to get across the straits to Hainan in a little open boat with a lot of native refugees from the pirates and landed wearing the wreck of a Chinese soldier's cap and not much else besides a sunburn. As both the commissioner of customs and the seasick customs guard of Hoihow were his fellow-countrymen, however, he was taken in hand, and when he went on board with me in the custom sail-boat, his hair already turning white above the face of a man completely cowed and never again able to stand up for himself, it was with a valise in his hand and money in his pocket, the commissioner's second best on his back, looking like a European diplomat who had been carried a few days out of his course on his way to an official function and been forced to sleep in his clothes. The foreign customs officers of China ports can always bring pressure to bear on the ships they deal with, and the Japanese captain had been prevailed upon, whether with or without his consent his impassive Oriental face did not of course show, to take the man to Haïphong. But it is enough to make even a Russian turn Bolshevik these days. Germans and Russians, it seemed, are not admitted to French Indo-China even if their passports are in order, and this man had none. The last I heard was that the French not only would not let him land but that they were going to fine the Japanese captain and make him take the forced passenger back to the port from which he had brought him.

## CHAPTER XIV

### DOWN THE WEST RIVER THROUGH KWANGSI

**T**WICE during the early months of my last year in the Far East I came to French Indo-China, which drips down from the southwestern corner of China proper like an icicle—or, in view of the climate, like a piece of melted candle-grease. The first time I had gone by direct steamer from Hong Kong to Saigon, at the equatorial end of the five-part colony, leaving my family installed in Canton; and having visited the marvelous ruins of Angkor in the jungles of what is now Cambodia but was until recently Siam, I returned to Canton overland. It is the last part of this journey, where it impinges upon China proper, with which we are now concerned, and though, as I have shown, I brought my family with me on the other occasion, the imaginative reader will have no difficulty in reinstalling them in the “Southern capital” while we make our way, under conditions not suited to family traveling, down the Si-kiang, or West River, through the whole length of the province of Kwangsi.

Two or three small but good French trains a day, not to mention automobiles on excellent French highways, are ready to carry the traveler from Hanoï, Parisian northern capital of Indo-China, to Langson and on to Namquam, the “south gate” of China proper. There one would be left to the more or less tender mercies of coolies to make his way over the ridge between the border and one of the upper branches of the Si-kiang, were it not that the French, with a nice mixture of politeness and policy, have joined the Chinese authorities in building what they call an “automobile” road from the end of the railway branch, which the not unjustly suspicious Celestials will not permit them to carry over into Chinese territory, to Lungchow. A tiny Peugeot driven by the Annamese chauffeur of the French *résident* of Langson carried me in four often-stalled hours to that important garrison and customs town of China some forty miles away. Prettily situated on a red river among rocky crags, with a background of abrupt mountains and with so much elevation that the sun, so impervious at Hanoï even in its first hour that morning, had less force at noon than

one would have liked, Langson was hard to leave so quickly. Dang-dong, a picturesque stronghold of the Foreign Legion, was the last glimpse of Indo-China, for the change at the frontier was sudden and decided. Black-enameled teeth and the red splotches of betel-nut juice stopped abruptly, and poverty, mud ruins, beggars, and the other Chinese characteristics began again. In place of serious men in carefully folded black turbans, so long governed by foreigners as to have suppressed all frankness before them, there were ragged, grinning coolies, courteous according to their lights but without a hint of subserviency; instead of the supple women of Annam in henna-colored robes and parasol-hats who jogged under their shoulder-poles to the very ends of the Tonkinese highways, there were women in trousers and blouse, as Chinese down to their unmanicured finger-tips as those of Peking, their feet not bound, but bare, dirty and cracked, with what purported to be a silver anklet above one or both of them. Ragged boy soldiers in the familiar old uniforms gaped half wonderingly after us as we snorted over the hills by a fair dirt road, on which there were neither men nor women carrying and no other traffic than our toy automobile, which the behavior of children, animals, and fowls showed to be the habitual state of affairs.

There are three gates between the two countries, but no formalities east-bound. The Chinese youth in the customs uniform who stood before his makeshift office gave me no sign to stop, though I did, disliking the thought of foreigners presuming upon their extraterritorial rights, and after a word in halting French he broke out with "Can't you speak English?" and showed great relief at my answer. It seemed strange to use my native tongue once more after weeks of almost unbroken French, but it demonstrated indisputably what is the second language of China. The striking rocky ranges all about the frontier increased in savage splendor as we approached Lungchow. In places, toward the end, the road was perhaps the best—no, the most laboriously constructed—in China, stretching for miles along a river precipice under overhanging cliffs so deeply blasted that I almost expected the mountain above to drop at any moment. Huge rocks had fallen where one might have been passing at the very moment they fell. A tunnel would have been far less an object of misgiving.

I broke in toward sunset upon the quiet of the Australian Catholic deputy commissioner of customs, whose duty it was to note my entry into the country and take my word for it that I had nothing dutiable, and who offered me bachelor hospitality forthwith, since the American



Protestant missionary was away on a trip, the Italian commissioner of customs was entertaining two young ladies from England and Scotland respectively, and the French consul had invited all this snug little foreign colony to dine with him that evening.

Yet Lungchow was as purely Chinese as if it were ten thousand *li* from foreign influence. Just then loafing, gambling, and feeding the spirits of their ancestors were the chief occupations of the people, as it was still the week of the lunar New Year, birthday of every Chinese, whatever the actual day of his birth, when no Celestial will work if he can in any way feed himself and his dead forebears without it. It may be that this far corner of China was more pious than Peking and the North, where we spent our other Chinese New Year; or it may be that the end of the nefarious Year of the Pig, last and reputed unluckiest of all the round of twelve, and the beginning not merely of the auspicious Year of the Rat but of a new sixty-year Cycle of Cathay was a time of special festivities all over the country. For now the bad luck that has been overwhelming China was to cease and things in every way to get better and better every day—a vain hope, alas! Fire-crackers exploded at frequent intervals. Tables stood in the doorway or the street in front of every house and shop, however humble, each bearing a piece of boiled pork, some other food wrapped in banana-leaves, little cups of wine, and a boiled duck or chicken, the deathly pale head bent back under a wing and gazing in a reproachful way at the passer-by. Every now and then the family came out to stand lighted joss-sticks upright in tin cans among the viands and bow down before them. The doorways, the walls, the family altars inside, were everywhere decorated with new red paper scrawled with a few characters; the kitchen god, his wife on one side, his concubine on the other, was back in gay new paper in every house from his seven-day journey to heaven to report on the conduct of the inmates, as truthfully as the sugar or opium on his lips made possible. It seems, unless I have misunderstood the story, that he ran off with a concubine, played the prodigal husband, as it were—missionaries use him in their sermons in place of the prodigal son—then came home again and begged food of his legitimate wife, as other husbands have done. Instead of turning him away she killed the fatted pig and was so kind to the erring spouse that he beat his head on the ground for his foolishness in leaving so good a woman, and died of a broken head; whereupon the wife saw that he was true to her to the end and worshiped him. Yet one notes that in all representations the concubine

is still close by his side. A walk through the town was a constant side-stepping of worshipers, bowing, kneeling, kowtowing on their faces in the filthy streets, white-haired old men performing the prescribed ancestral rites before a food-decorated table, shopkeepers solemnly going through similar antics before their dingy closed stalls, none so low as to occupy himself with worldly affairs. Luckily the spirits of the dead eat only the aroma of the food offered them, and the rewards of piety include full stomachs, for it looked as if otherwise many of the living might have gone very hungry. Whether they believed in all this hocus-pocus or not the people of Lungchow could no more omit their part of it than one of our politicians would dare not to be some church's devout disciple, or a rural resident of Tennessee deny the literal truth of Genesis.

Lungchow is made picturesque by the rocky, precipitous, isolated mountains about it, many of them with steps of stone leading up to forts or monasteries on top, some with what looks like a ring around the summit, probably walled places of refuge, or of defense, now the lairs of bandits, for though the Chinese have a score of forts along the French border they cannot even cope with their own brigands. But the place is of little importance except as a frontier garrison town, made so in place of Taiping, farther down the river, after the war with the French over the possession of Tonkin. It is proud, too, of the only bridge across the West River in all its extent, a real steel-girder suspension-bridge, built more than ten years ago by a man from Canton, springing in a single leap from a great rock on the foreigners' side of the river to the crowded native town, more than fifty feet above the water now, though at flood-time the river sometimes flows clear over it. It saves the boatmen a vast amount of labor, and robs them of a corresponding amount of income, for the river here runs through a narrow gorge between high and precipitous rock cliffs that make no easy boating. The town drops sheer down to the river's edge in shop-residences facing the first street inland, in the common Chinese way, their backs projecting on high props and poles over the bank, down which goes all their filth and garbage; nay, I malign them, for they retain a considerable portion of this permanently. Down on this delectable waterfront floated a huge "flower-boat" in appearance not unlike the bathing-places along the Seine at Paris and the mere smell of which made one think of loathsome diseases.

I had added proof during my first night that I was back in China, for bugles again made life miserable from two until dawn, and even



An old man of Kwangsi performing his ancestral rites at New Year's time before a table set for the spirits of his forebears in front of his dingy little shop



On our way down the Si-kiang our little steamer towed a cargo-boat loaded mainly with opium, abandoning the unwieldy craft to its rowers wherever there were rapids to pass



This seller of "eating snakes" in Nanning suffered many perforations of the wrist for his kindness in posing before my camera



Millions of the nurse-maids of China are little bigger than the charges they tote about on their backs

the foreign customs officers had a watchman going about beating a bamboo from dark till dawn, saying it was the only way to be sure he kept awake. Soldiers were numerous, many of them wearing fingerless mittens of the kind our grandmothers knitted, though in the cold North, where chapped hands show how much more they are needed, any "garment for the hands" except the ends of too long sleeves are unknown among Chinese who have not succumbed to foreign influence. Some of the women carried hand-warmers in the form of a perforated pan full of burning charcoal, usually up against their hips under the skirts of their jackets.

Lungchow, like most of Kwangsi, was just then politically an adherent of Peking. The year before Cantonese troops had taken the town while the defense commissioner—who spoke good French—was off his guard, his eyes perhaps turned west instead of eastward. Lungchow claimed, and seemed to have ample proof, that Sun Yat-sen offered a silver dollar each to deserters who joined him with their rifles, and the town lost many of its defenders, until some of them were recaptured and shot. But that of course is time-honored and legitimate Chinese warfare. The Cantonese looted the place and after a reign of terror in which they cut up their enemies and ate their hearts and livers, carrying such delicacies openly in their hands like so much pork, they fled, carrying off sixty-three girls. The women retaliated by chopping into many pieces a Canton man who had been left behind wounded or ill, or who had overslept. These are not mere legends of bygone centuries but things of to-day which foreign residents know to be facts, if they did not actually see them. Whatever may be thought of him in the rest of China and in foreign lands, the people of western Kwangsi look upon Sun Yat-sen and his clique as the worst curse that ever befell them.

Whoever the ruler the people suffer. When the fat general in power here now by the support of a relative in the provincial capital returned on the heels of the Cantonese he issued ten million paper dollars, which quickly fell to the hundredth part of their face value in the exchange-shops. But the people had no choice than to accept them for what they pretended to be. One merchant who refused was fined twenty thousand silver dollars; another, twice that; still another was sentenced to be shot for the same offense, but he was let off on the pleading of his fellows, and the payment of a hundred—finally bargained down to sixty—thousand dollars. Everything is bargainable in China; it is not at all uncommon for people to try to get stamps

at the post-office for less than their face-value. Then, having had value received for his spurious notes, the general, thanks apparently to some tricky policy rather than to a pricking conscience, offered to buy them back at fifteen cents on the dollar, and people stood on one another's shoulders to reach the window of the yamen where they were redeemed.

It was this same ruler, unless I am wronging him, who had a woman thrown off the bridge into the swift river far below and shot by his soldiers. It seems that another of these "spirit women," who pretend to tell fortunes and perform miracles, had once helped one of his concubines to escape with a lover, so that when this one was accused not only of charging too much but of not casting out devils as she had promised—though Heaven knows our own doctors and dentists and lawyers do the same thing—she was condemned to an ignominious death. The soldiers fired six volleys at her in the water, the last one, strangely enough, a hit, and her witchcraft was over. Domestic tragedies were also reputed to be common in Lungchow. A Chinese can legally kill a man caught *flagrante delicto* with his wife, but he must bury the body. There had been such a case here very recently. The outraged husband had tied up his delinquent spouse in a public place and then killed her paramour before her, leaving his body exposed beside her for five days, while young rowdies came at night to light matches and peer in her face. All the town seemed to think such things quite all right, and the very perpetrators of such deeds smiled at one in the most harmless manner in the world. In fact, except in rare aroused moments they are harmless. Foreigners, or Chinese from other parts, who have lived for some time among these people of western Kwangsi say that they have no balance, can never be trusted, that they may be very friendly one moment and fly into a general murderous passion the next. Formerly, the indictment goes on, they were the most harmless of mortals; now it is the ideal of all the young fellows to go out with a gun and get rich, and "they would kill their own fathers for money." Mankind is indeed much alike the world over.

The French were once so sure of getting a railway concession from their Langson branch into Lungchow that they built a big stone station—now the French consulate—and a stone slide not unlike the steeper levees along the Mississippi, down which French goods were to be slid into the boats that were to take them down the river to Nanning. But the Chinese have gradually learned that once any great power gets a foothold in China, however altruistic its intentions may appear

at the time, it is as impossible to eradicate it as to dig up the huge stone footsteps of Buddha miraculously planted in the boulders of her sacred mountains, and the concession was never granted. There used to be another road over into Indo-China, by another suspension-bridge twenty kilometers away across a branch of the upper Si-kiang. We all ran out to it in the commissioner's new Fiat on my last full day in Lungchow, along a cross between a road and a smooth meadowland, passing close to the foot of several of those mysterious isolated mountains rising out of the plain to wall-girdled summits, and meeting the old Dodge of the military dictator with five of his wives and some of his children returning from a joy-ride to a kind of country-place he maintains there. Under such domestic conditions a motor-car is no mere luxury. But the great floods which often sweep clear over the Lungchow bridge had torn this one aside as a rude hand does a spider-web, and though we could look across to the Tonkinese mountains, like a fantastic black wall with perpetual clouds, we were effectually cut off from crossing the border.

It was my luck to reach Lungchow just a day or two after the departure of the little steamer that came up from Nanning every week or two. Several boatmen promised half-heartedly, and at a price at which one ought to have been able to buy outright the best boat available, to take me down in their sampans—more exactly, *wupuns*, for at least five rather than three boards are needed to make a boat that will stand the strain of this slow, uncomfortable, and uncertain journey, thanks to the bandits along the river, the sand-bars and whirlpools. I decided to set out on foot, only to discover that because of the length of Lungchow's New Year's celebration I could not get a carrier. But the young English-speaking Chinese postmaster prevailed upon one of his mail-carriers, whose official load was light, to carry my simple belongings to Taipingfu, two days below, and we were off. It was magnificent walking, along grassy paths near the river, restful silence amid wild mountain scenery that grew as we advanced, though in places with stony walking. We met a bandit-looking group worthy of Chicago, and I had a sudden vision of trouble. But the fellows dismounted, stood at attention, and took off their caps as I passed! Every little while we met loose-looking characters as well armed as I was weaponless, but they gave me no more trouble than did the tigers, one of which a French priest had recently found eating a coolie in the overland path.

The mail-courier soon picked up another man to do the real carry-

ing, after the good old Chinese custom, the rural people being readier to work at the New Year's season; but even if his profit was high on the transaction it was well to have a man who constantly tramped this route and knew all the short cuts, and whom ferrymen made haste to obey as a government agent. The Chinese were everywhere very thoughtful of their ancestors and their mud gods in this season, and even the smallest villages had given them gaily decorated quarters and were religiously feeding them daily. The living might be in the last stages of misery, but the dead and the gods had cleanliness, so far as the Chinese recognize it, and plenty.

Landscapes along the upper Si-kiang teem with fantastic rock peaks with strata at curious angles, like those standing forth by hundreds out of the incredibly blue sea of the beautiful Bay of Along off the coast of Tonkin not much south of here and stretching away through much of the coastal region of Annam. Labyrinths of this stratified black rock, evidently volcanic and filled with cavities caused by air-bubbles in the molten mass from which they came, disclosed constantly varying forms,—mountains shaped like snail-shells, like corkscrews, natural terraces a dozen layers high, recalling the sacred Aztec pyramids of Mexico, some like windowed sky-scrapers, palisades dwarfing in size and beauty those of the Hudson, natural pagodas, temples in solid rock, mountains of every manner of fantastic form. Most of these were without a sign of vegetation, and many had natural or partly man-made caves high up on the faces above the river, across which we were ferried several times in some rotten old boards thrown together in the general shape of a boat.

A scanty population was grubbing out a livelihood among these black rocks, harder, more disheartening husbandry than the worst New England farm ever abandoned. There was no rice, perhaps for lack of water, but Indian corn grew in every little patch of blackish earth. In their bitter struggle for livelihood the clod-like mountainous people had terraced tiny hollows, plowed where there was hardly a handful of earth in an acre of black rocks. No doubt they could raise cattle, for there was coarse fodder in fair abundance, but probably they could get no transportation to a market, even if bandits or more regular soldiers did not drive off the stock. Here and there were somewhat larger patches of fertility, which all were plowing almost feverishly, even if at a pre-Christian pace; water-buffaloes, ordinary cattle, now and then a donkey, men, women, boys and girls, every one and everything was out grubbing in the fields. Even the soil was



blackish, to add to the general gloom under so dull a sky; except for the magnificent mountain scenery and now and then a bend of the river below, the only things to lighten the scene were the kapok, or vegetable-cotton, trees, covered with beautiful red flowers like roses, that stood scattered over the landscape. At least it was beautiful country, almost untouched, for the few cloddish peasants counted little more than marmots or gophers, though their Chinese curiosity might make them more troublesome in the villages—for there were of course no isolated houses. There were a few birds, some shouting of the plowers to their four-legged and human assistants, but on the whole a vast, almost frightening, silence.

When we speak of China as densely populated we must not forget that some of the southwestern provinces are very thinly peopled, for here the soil will not sustain ordinary Chinese multitudinousness. Where Shantung is credited with 680 and Kiangsu with 620 people to the square mile, Kwangsi is guessed to have only sixty-six, fewer than any other province of China proper. Nothing could be a greater contrast than the intense fertility and excellent transportation of near-by French Indo-China and this Kwangsi neighbor, with the same husbandry, the same tools, the same slow and uncertain means of transport, even the same banditry, as three thousand years ago.

The people of these rural parts seldom appeared to be pure Chinese. Many wore modern caps, so that at a distance they looked like school-boys farming for their summer vacation; on closer view they proved decidedly earth-born, appreciably darker than the northern Chinese, with no pigtails, no bound feet, but all cast dismally in the same mold. Remnants of aboriginal races, mixed perhaps less with the Chinese than with the Hakkas who wandered into this uninviting province, still occupy infertile regions in the southwest. The country speech of Lungchow district and much of the country west of the Kwangsi capital seems proof enough that they are largely of the Tai race, related to the Laos or Shan, that was driven farther westward not so many centuries ago in a great series of battles along the West River. Remnants of many other tribes have been found, the names of which would mean little to most of us, though their several million perhaps make worth mention the Chung-chiah, who seem to have come in from the west.

We came while the day was still on the sunny side of its dotage to a larger but no less miserable village than the rest, called Heung-shui,

hanging in a single hog-wallow of a street over the edge of the now visibly larger river. A note I carried but could not read made me welcome in the post-office, but that was not much of a place in which to spend a night. Crowds came in to watch me eat what I could fish from my baggage, fingering anything they could get their hands on, and though the postmaster spoke some mandarin he was visibly an inveterate opium-smoker, as were not only a dozen other human wrecks hanging about the mud den where Heung-shui gets its scanty mail, but most of the town who could afford it. My unpleasant host led me into a back room still less palatial and lay down on his wooden bed with its thin dirty reed mat, a folded quilt under his doped head, and took to rolling his smokes, inviting me to share them or at least to look on.

Suddenly I heard singing on the other side of his mud wall, not the saw-filing Chinese noises that pass for music among this enigmatical people, but familiar hymns, though I could not make out the words, and the general effect would not have driven the horseshoe circle at the Metropolitan to burst their gloves with enthusiasm. The opium-smoker murmured, "*Yeh-ssu-t'ang*" (Jesus hall), half confirming a growing suspicion. I strolled nonchalantly outside and slowly up the street, glancing in next door as I passed; to hurry would have been bad Chinese manners. As Shakspeare might have put it, you could have knocked me over with a fly-swatter if there were not three foreigners, two women and a man, to all appearances my own countrymen, standing before the unconsciously disorderly audience that filled, together with rows of wooden benches, a room large for those parts, all doing their worst to perpetuate in the local dialect some of our too well-known Protestant masterpieces. The man gave me the high sign without losing a note, which settled any lingering suspicion that he was British, and motioned to me to enter. My cigar lasted so long that the meeting was breaking up when I accepted the invitation, the crowd gathering about me as if I were an unexpected proof that the world contained other beings of the same general outward appearance as the three strange creatures who had been leading the singing. Or it may be that I was pointed out as the horrible example that illustrated the text or sermon. Heung-shui's other guests were American Baptist missionaries from unfamed towns in the less sophisticated portions of my native land, and they had been in this equally unrenowned hamlet for several days, preparing to bring a dozen of the townsmen to salvation by coaxing them to be immersed in the river below, which to all appearances had never in their lives happened

to any of the population, unless by accident. From that point of view their intentions could do no harm. Accomplish this mission or not, they were going down to Nanning on the steamer I had given up waiting for at Lungchow, and which I had passed that afternoon stuck on a sand-bar. Fortunately they were housed, unless the word sticks in the throat, elsewhere, and being duly invited, I took up my abode among the church benches.

The courier could not get another helper next morning, so that he was as nearly surly as your Chinese coolie gets when I insisted on going on. While I might have waited for the boat, the mixture of Bapticism and Chinese village could easily have proved too much. Taipingfu might be as bad, but I would have a respite during the day's walk.

At Taipingfu the upper Si-kiang comes within a hundred yards of making an island, and a wall with one gate has been thrown across the narrow neck to complete the protection given by the river cliffs. A compact hamlet huddles about this first and principal gate, half a mile from anything except the cattle-grazed graves that take up most of the space within. Until you get to a second, nay, even a third, wall and virtually inside the miserable thing, there is nothing worthy a name on the map to be seen, and even then you have found nothing worth coming to see. Some rowdies disguised as soldiers hung about the gates, though surely there was nothing inside worth protecting.

Luckily Taipingfu has a priest from Brittany, whose church I espied at the inner gate in time to drive the courier toward it. The father was forty-eight years old and had spent exactly half his life in this miserable burg, the only non-Chinese for many miles around, and he did not seem even to mind the strong probability, borne out by his appearance, that he would be there twenty-four more. "Why should I go back to Brittany?" he asked. "All the people I ever knew there are dead or changed or moved away; it would be a very foolish thing to do, saddening rather than pleasant."

He read Chinese classics as easily as American women read novels, and to judge from bits he quoted to me, he evidently got as great pleasure out of them; he had learned to make a rice-wine almost equal to the *vin de messe* sent him through his bishop in Nanning, and he had grown so accustomed to worse native cigars that he found the terrible ones I had bought in Indo-China "*délicieux!*" What more could any reasonable man want? Then there was his garden and his church and

his mass every morning, and now and then an itinerating tour among his rural parishioners. Rosy and hale as a man of thirty, he looked in his patriarchally long black beard, black gown, and huge Latin Quarter tam o' shanter like a Holbein portrait, and sometimes—if I shall not be misunderstood—like the devil, at least as that mythological chief of evil is conceived by some of our best actors and painters. Perhaps two or three times a year a foreigner passes through Taipingfu on a boat, where the padre might not even hear of him; once in a while he got down to Nanning and perhaps every few years to Canton, even Hong Kong, for a few days, but unlike Protestant missionaries, with their families, the frequent “conferences” that bring them together from all parts of China to “pep them up,” and their “furloughs” home at least every seven years, the Catholic priest comes to make his permanent home, often the only foreigner in a vast district, and never to go back to his native land again, unless he happens to live to such a ripe old age that he is retired instead of leaving his bones on the field of battle.

The father's welcome was at least as hearty and to all appearances as sincere as Robinson Crusoe's would have been; that is, after he found I was not penniless and spoke French. Naturally his two-story, almost entirely Chinese dwelling around a little patio with flowers in the center showed plainly the lack of a womanly hand—it is true that I did not see his rooms up-stairs—and our two meals a day were more plentiful than Parisian. My bedroom next to the dining-room was—well, in twenty-four years one forgets many of the minor comforts of life, even if one has become accustomed at twenty-four to more of them than are customary in Brittany, and I found it more comfortable to put up my own cot than to use the bed he generously offered. We Americans are altogether too much the creatures of bodily comforts anyway. At least the animated conversation of a virile Latin was a welcome change from the usual round of solemn Protestant missionaries and unenthusiastic Anglo-Saxons. In my honor we had a bottle of real *vin de messe*, but I could not blame him for keeping most of that rare stuff to drink by himself before the altar, especially as his home-brew rice-wine showed no great difference from it except in after-taste and was certainly superior to most bootleg of our own liquorless land.

The hearty Breton could not give the town a much better character than appeared on the surface. The women all gambled, he said, chiefly “matchang,” as he pronounced and would have spelled it, and the less

said about general morals, in spite of his long residence there, the better. The only improvement he pointed out to me was that at New Year's time the Catholic converts did not include among the red-paper, character-daubed decorations about every doorway the three pieces of paper hanging down over the top of the door; somehow this one superstition even the Catholics cannot fit into their rites. That eager, aggressive, worrying atmosphere of Protestant missions bent on forcing every possible advantage of Western culture on passive mankind was lacking. Perhaps that is what kept him so hale and rosy. He went through his masses 365 days a year, congregation or no congregation, and if the people of Taipingfu were not saved he was not going to lose sleep over it. No doubt now and then in the confessional he did drop bits of good practical advice, too; and perhaps the mere presence of a foreigner of such long standing and, in this far-away corner of China, with almost the power of the local magistrate, as Catholic priests had before the Boxer uprising, helped to hold things down. Once or twice during my stay a woman convert with a child or two came in their best New Year's clothes to pay their respects to the padre, the girls with red smudges on their lips and outside their eyes, a round red spot on the forehead. The soldiery, especially of the expedition of Sun Yat-sen, had destroyed all but one filthy temple, so that most of those who were not communicants of the Breton had to perform their religious rites at home.

He had arrived on the heels of the Boxer trouble and had stayed on undisturbed during the 1911 rebellion, revolution, misfortune, or whatever you choose to call it. Then every one, he said, like the country itself putting on the outward garb of republicanism; wanted European clothes at once. What a place his parish would have been in those days for a man of proper background with a big supply of second-hand clothing! He could have sold boat-loads; that is, at such prices as prevailed in this corner of China, which would have made his habitual wail about no profit only too true. All alleged European clothing to be had soon gave out as the young bloods raided the shops; others got a pair of Western trousers, a derby hat, an imitation of our shoes, or something else, and trotted proudly about town in them. Like people of the Latin Quarter, or our own Greenwich Villagers, they thought that outward appearance would also change them within, that if they were original in garb they would be so in mind. The Chinese have a hard-pan of sense underneath which made short work of that fad, and now the people had returned to their sensible native

dress, with such modifications from the West as they found they really needed and could properly use, so that in a larger way one may hope that some day the country will come to its senses and do the same governmentally and as a whole, instead of persisting in trying to dress itself in garments in no way fitted to it.

Taipingfu is a fine place for one who does not like excitement, or who is reconciled to staying there until duly called to his reward in a mass-saying, incense-scented heaven; but the ordinary man waiting anxiously for a boat that does not appear day after day finds in it a hint of what Napoleon must have experienced at St. Helena. There were some rocky walks in the big space between the actual town wall and the one across the neck of land, mainly over grassy graves partly of stone, with enticing vistas on every side—except up the river, where the smoke of a steamer never appeared. The rock cliffs and fantastic peaks through which the Si-kiang forces its way from western Kwangsi to the bay region of Canton were at their height here, queerly shaped bare stone hills piled up in every direction, mountains laid up in layers that suggested in a gigantic way the hand of man that built the great ruins of Angkor I had recently visited. The padre took a short stroll outside the wall with me one day, but he preferred to walk up and down on the *dalles* before his church in his own compound.

For all its name Taipingfu has nothing to do with the Taiping rebellion; for though that started in this province of Kwangsi, the Hakka school-teacher who, misunderstanding the smattering of Christianity he had from a simple American missionary, or pretending to do so, led an uprising that cost China twenty million lives and strewed half the empire with ruins, was born up in the mountains near Nanning, still, alas, several days away. There was a kind of telegraph-line into Taipingfu, and a kind of steamer agency in which the padre had inspired friendship or awe enough to make it fairly likely to notify him as soon as any one knew when the steamer would come; but these things were so uncertain that I dared not go very far away, and every evening I had to pack and be ready to jump at any time during the night, the padre assuring me that he would hear the whistle in time. He did not look like a man who slept lightly, however, and the worst of it was that I often fancied I heard the whistle, or a churning of the earth that suggested its screw, and spent much time awake. If I had kept on afoot, it turned out—which I could not have done because the courier went no farther and I could still get no one else in this long

festive season to carry my baggage—I should have been in Nanning as soon as my boat; but it would have cost me several times more in money as well as exertion, for coolie wages were as high as fares were low, and expenses along the way amount to something even in rural China.

It would have been a great relief to know in the beginning that I was to spend not one but four nights with the padre, and that when the uninspiring craft did come it would be at noonday of a Sunday, a whole week after I had crossed the frontier, and that we would neither of us hear the whistle or be notified by the agency but should just happen upon the steamer quietly run up on the sand-bank at the foot of the town while we were out on an after-mass stroll. Luckily it had to buy wood and food and do all those other things which a Chinese river-boat always does at any town of size, so that we had ample time to get a coolie—because the priest had one of his own—to trot my stuff down and squirm it on board. It was fortunate, aside from any loss of sleep and the disparity between the lighting and the paving of Taipingfu, that the boat did not pass in the night, for I should have hated at such an hour to have to walk the crooked little board from shore to boat and try to force my way into a place among the mob that inhabited the sad craft. As it was, I managed to preëempt space for my cot while some of the passengers were ashore, so that though the filth and crowding were beyond Western conception, with nothing long or high or wide enough for a real human being, and Celestials lay as thickly as they could be packed on all sides, even under me, I was able to stretch out and thereby turn an impossible trip into a merely uncomfortable one.

The three Baptists were on board, even on Sunday, and in splendid spirits, for they had succeeded in getting fifteen men of Heung-shui to go down into the muddy river with the young pastor and be effectively soused, though none of the women could be induced to accept similar cold salvation at the hands of the older of the two women. That she was a person whose desires are not easily flouted by the people among whom she had chosen to dwell and immerse was demonstrated that very Sunday afternoon. The small dog that traveled with her fell overboard and, surly though the pilot was about it, he obeyed her order to go a mile or more back up-stream against the strong current to pick the shivering beast off a rock. It is doubtful whether he would have squandered so much wood to save a Chinese child, and dogs are no such

precious creatures to the Celestials as they are to us. That her pet could scarcely be blamed for absorbing some of his mistress's furor for immersion did not seem to occur to her as she chided and dried him during all the rest of the afternoon.

We tied up at dark before the usual dirty village, for the danger of bandits would alone have made night navigation perilous even if sand-bars and rapids had not made it impossible. There are so many petty dictators in the villages along the West River that foreigners speak of them as "kings." Kwangsi was just then more peaceful than it had been in a long time, the governor whom the Cantonese troops had temporarily driven out being a man of energy. Formerly all boats had to stop at every bandit station while the captain went ashore to pay tribute, sometimes as much as \$500 on every voyage. Fares and freight-charges went up accordingly, though it may be said in favor of the Chinese that once the trouble was over they let prices come down again instead of holding them at the high level until a new excuse to boost them once more came along. Now the bandits had been largely routed, though as it proved only temporarily, for long before I left China travel on the West River was very dangerous again. With great caves and grottoes in the precipitous shores, some with temples, some with gates across the front, ladders here and there up the faces of the cliffs to them, the pirates did not lack for strongholds, and it is no wonder that in these gorges robbers have long had boats at their mercy.

As we neared Nanning the mountains calmed down to little more than rolling country, with stone steps down from the many villages on the banks and paths below these to the water itself, now almost as low, I noted with growing apprehension, as in low-water September. It was dark when we finally reached the provincial capital, and with its many electric lights and its hundreds of sampans, each roofed over into a home with at least a light before the family altar occupying the center of the boat, the place stood out of the night like a great metropolis. The two old women whom I induced to row me ashore in their aged dwelling stopped at half a dozen floating *likin* stations for a man with a lantern to come and make sure they were telling the truth in shouting that they had only a foreigner and his belongings on board, in spite of my insistence that they let these guardians of dictatorial income take their statement for granted and row me on to the destination where full civilization was awaiting me, known to the Chinese as "Mei-fu" and to foreigners as "Socony."



By daylight Nanning proved to be one of the smallest provincial capitals of China, as Kwangsi is the most thinly populated of the eighteen provinces. It is built like a new moon on the outer curve of the river, here a real stream, upon which it crowds in overhanging balconies and house-boats. A half-ruined city wall does its best to inclose it; above its dull-gray tiled roofs rises here and there a drying-place balcony that seemed to serve also as family sitting-room on pleasant evenings, and of course the superstructures of the city gates. The narrow streets, some on a sharp incline, are paved with stone slabs worn glass-smooth by centuries of feet and so slimy with the constant carrying of water from the river to the householders that in European shoes it was not at all difficult for the stroller to land suddenly on the back of his neck.

The appetite of Nanning was perhaps its chief point of interest. It is not far overland from Pakhoi and Hainan, so it is natural that much the same tastes should prevail. It was not at all unusual to find a skinned dog or cat, even a rat, ready for the cooking-pot, especially down on the river-front. Nanning looked like a worse place to try to keep a pet dog than the realm of the busiest pound-keeper in America, while the peril in which the family tabby stood was shown by the strings and even half-inch ropes with which cats were tied to doorways or counters along any street. Early in my morning stroll I came upon iron baskets full of snakes in shop-doors and on the shoulder-poles of peddlers. They were non-venomous—though the other kind, cobras in particular, are considered great delicacies—five to seven feet long, and were sold by weight. For that matter in Nanning the seller even weighs an orange to determine its price, and I saw a little girl buy two “cash” worth of meat, solemnly weighed out for her. The largest snake I found for sale, with a red head and a long red tail, was being offered at nearly sixty cents gold, but of course that would have kept the larder stocked for some time. When I asked for a picture, one of the peddlers obligingly took a snake out by the tail, quite a different reptile from the sluggish drugged and doctored ones of a circus snake-charmer, for with a lithe swift turn it inclosed his wrist within its wide flat jaws. The man asserted impossible scandal about its forebears in an increasingly loud voice, at the same time slapping it on the head, but never hard enough to do it any great harm, for like fish the edible snakes of China sell best alive. It clung to him like taxes, like a savage bull puppy, and had literally to be pried loose, leaving the wrist bleeding at a score of little needle-

like perforations. A twenty-cent piece solved the question of damages, a similar coin from the high-caste interpreter of my host who was acting as guide—for that gave him face, as much as to say, "You see I, too, as well as this great foreigner I am showing about, am rich"—bringing the indemnity up to as much as the sufferer would probably have demanded for the loss of a finger.

One of the customs commissioner's former cooks, on the strength of the standing this position and a trip to Canton gave him, opened a semi-foreign-style restaurant in Nanning, with a sign in English. But as the few foreign residents all had establishments of their own and foreign travelers rarely if ever came to patronize him, and there were few natives of Nanning with even a curiosity for foreign food, the enterprising restaurateur was making both ends meet by serving a favorite Kwangsi dish, a mixture of snake and cat meat, said to be "very sweet," and the young bloods of the town had formed the habit of dropping into the swagger place with the foreign sign for their after-theater dinners. It must have been mainly a question of taste, for Nanning has plenty of beef, at least of the water-buffalo, to say nothing of pork, and the region was less poor and had higher wages than most of China. Perhaps it was Hakka influence. Let not the hasty reader assume, however, that the old slander about the Chinese eating cats, rats, snakes, and dogs is true. The great mass of the Chinese, except perhaps in time of famine, would scorn such viands almost as vehemently as a Westerner.

The river-front of the Kwangsi capital varies greatly according to season. Now there was a considerable beach, garbage- and occupation-strewn, of course, along the front of the town, yet only the preceding August such a flood had come that much of the extramural Bund had fallen in, great stone facing and all, sampans rowed about the yards even of the foreigners, and down town the water was up to the second stories, now and then a wall falling with a soggy crash. In such days one can go down the Si-kiang in a flash; I know of a foreigner who made the whole trip from Lungchow to Canton in sixty hours, as against the fifteen days I was to spend. Down along the waterfront little girls hardly large enough to walk, nurse-maids who would not have reached the age of discretion in lands where children have a real childhood, carried small brother or sister on their backs as they helped at the house- or boat-work. Formerly the boat children wore a joint of bamboo as a life-saver, but my host took pride in the fact that now a small oil-tin of much the same shape was

in greater demand for that purpose. The very small children were tied with ropes, like the cats on shore, and the one I saw fall in was yanked out swiftly but so nonchalantly as to suggest, as it squalled itself out without any further attention from its busy mother, the advantage of learning one's element early in life.

I saw much of Nanning in company with the American business man to whom I owed palatial hospitality there, and he saw far more of it during my day with him than in the year he had lived there. Though he had first come out to the East as a teacher in the Philippines, an enthusiastic young graduate with, presumably, the average American curiosity about the world and its inhabitants, he had sunk into the typical foreign business man in China, bent on having as little to do with the Chinese as possible, and never going about the city except along that half of the main street included in the most direct route between his establishment and the native agency of his product. Let me not be misunderstood as criticizing; I am merely reporting. The excitements of life for Westerners of educated background were not numerous in Nanning; moreover, though there was no outward unfriendliness, one felt a kind of anti-foreign sentiment which could not but have decreased any tendency to interracial intercourse. It was not hard to understand why the little handful of foreign residents—the missionaries, for obvious reasons, and the "outdoor men" of the customs, whose social standing made it impossible, excepted—gathered nightly at one or another of their spacious, well-servanted, but wifeless homes to pass long evenings between dominoes and lemonade in their stronger manifestations. The mansions of the several foreign corporations and of the three services which foreigners manage for the Chinese were not exactly in Nanning but on the otherwise uninhabited Bund some distance down the river, and the gathering was confined to the usual elements in small treaty-ports—the commissioner of customs, the postmaster, the head of the salt gabelle, Britishers all in this instance, the American selling oil, and the Englishman selling cigarettes for a corporation that more often recruits its personnel from the Carolinas, with now and then a visitor of high enough rank to be admissible, or a nondescript, unpigeon-holable passer-by like myself who could be given the benefit of the doubt.

Such communities remind one of the moss-grown saying that there are three principal American businesses in China and that the motto of all of them is "*Fiat lux*; let there be light." Some come to bring

the "light of the gospel," some to distribute the product of our oil-wells, mainly in the form of kerosene, and the rest to work toward the ideal of "a cigarette in the mouth of every man, woman, and child in China." Of the three the third shows most signs of accomplishing its full mission, thereby bringing whatever honors accrue to our most aggressive American business methods—to say nothing of dividends to make the holders of other stocks weep with envy and to increase the endowments available to universities willing to change old religious names which they have no doubt outgrown in order to perpetuate those of our tobacco kings. For he who might judge from its name that the largest foreign business in China is as British as it sounds should bear in mind the difference in the income-tax laws of England and the United States toward those whose earnings come from foreign parts. Now, I like my after-dinner cigar and I am not one of those who would deprive the rest of mankind of the pleasures of the minor vices; but I find myself on the side of the reformers in the cigarette battle of China. Whatever the horrors of the narcotic weed itself, it cannot but do harm where twenty cigarettes a day make a serious inroad on the income of hundreds of millions who need all they can earn and more for proper nourishment, and where no line of sex or age is drawn in the practice of deleterious habits. Even the widespread use of chewing-gum would be a serious misfortune. It is not merely among adult male coolies that one notes the drawn faces and pasty color that might be ascribed to opium-smoking or tuberculosis were there not other evidences that they are due merely to the squandering on cigarettes of money badly needed for food. Small wonder the Chinese find us as enigmatical as we do them. With one group of foreigners—one might be more specific and say Americans—including among their missionary work an anti-cigarette campaign and another group of the same nationality covering every available space even on temple walls with appealing pictorial displays shouting the merits of the cigarette, what in all fairness is the simple Chinese of the masses to believe?

The influence of all of us is no doubt good and bad. I recall that in contrast to inveigling my host into his first call upon his only fellow-countrymen in Nanning, the disciples of immersion, I also coaxed the two still youthful members of the little Bund community to go with me for a glimpse of the night life of the capital. Down at the big hotel that stands out on the waterfront in the center of the town crescent like the nose of the man in the moon swarmed such

wickedness as would have cost the pious Baptists at least a night's sleep. There was fan-tan to spare down through the three stories of the building, mah-jongg parties with stakes that explained why the game has often been forbidden in many parts of China, a strong scent of burning opium in the air, and scores of little painted prostitutes hardly averaging fifteen years of age waiting in invitingly open rooms on hard wooden beds with only a coverlet or mat as mattress. Only one of these showed any interest in foreigners. She was an unusually physically attractive girl for her race, in her very becoming brown trousers and jacket, a flower in her oily black hair, who must at some time have had a foreign client and found him pleasing, at least financially; for all that evening, until he called for his yacht to rescue us, she pestered my host, indubitably the most beautiful among us, however high that may rank him in manly beauty, dragging at his arms and coat-tails and vainly but constantly repeating, now in a wheedling, now in a commanding, occasionally in a shrill angry voice her only English vocabulary, "Got tam!" Any such open soliciting is so unusual in China that it made Nanning seem a new experience. To the credit of the lonely little foreign communities in such out-of-the-way corners of China it is rarely that a Westerner succumbs completely to the vices flourishing about him and fetches up out on the unfenced, grave-pimpled hillsides beyond the city walls where goats and water-buffaloes and hardy red cattle graze a meager livelihood.

There were more or less frequent steamers, of a kind, from Nanning down the Si-kiang to Wuchow on the eastern edge of the province, and several flew the American flag; not that they were really American bottoms, but merely that a man or two had found it lucrative to save them from the dangers of confiscation by registering at the American consulate in Canton, for a small fee or a kind of royalty on their earnings, boats that were mainly if not entirely Chinese-owned. Rumor had it that one of these, the *Far Key*, was to leave at four on the afternoon of my arrival. Possibly the most exasperating of all the things that temper the bucolic pleasures of Chinese travel is that the Chinese never tell the truth about the hour of departure. Possibly they never know it; but much interior travel gives one the suspicion that they would not tell if they did, yet they are always ready to name an hour with a greater air of certainty than our railroad men would permit themselves, and one is almost certain to have to wait for hours even if he boards the craft at the moment it

is "sure" to start. Luckily my host of Nanning was a man of standing able to wheedle some of the truth out of the comprador on the *Far Key*, who gave me until the following morning. That meant, the foreigners assured me, that I could catch the boat after the dinner-party scheduled for the following night.

For, it seemed, a curious condition of affairs prevailed in the Kwangsi capital. The chief source of revenue of the warring factions in China, particularly in the southwestern provinces, is opium. Much of this is grown in Kweichow and Yünnan, and the Yünnanese portion in particular, except when banditry diverts the Kweichow stuff from its natural route by way of the Yang Tze, comes down the larger branch of the West River, which joins not far above Nanning the one I had descended. At Posey, the first town of importance in Kwangsi Province on that branch, all the opium from the flourishing poppy-fields beyond is taxed by the military rulers of the province. In theory it is then "suppressed," in accordance with Chinese law, just as the tax is registered as a "fine" by the misnamed "Opium Suppression Bureau"; in fact there is a constant procession of opium boats from Posey down to Nanning, so that although little hop is grown in Kwangsi itself—indeed growing is forbidden!—it had now become the most important traffic of the province. Opium which did not show that it had been stamp-taxed at Posey was subject to confiscation by the military authorities. Arrived at Nanning under some gay makeshift military banner, or even a false foreign flag, neither of which civil authorities along the way can question, it was landed at an "extra tax *pai*," or floating wharf, and was then carried overland through the city under soldier escort to boats to Wuchow, waiting just around a bend of the river, after these had cleared the maritime customs. Any one in Nanning who knew anything was perfectly well aware of this subterfuge. Time was when it was easier to bribe the minor members of the customs force. An almost illiterate English tide-waiter, and "outdoor man" in the customs service at Nanning for two years, at the end of that time went home and retired with a fortune of £65,000—free of income tax, even if he had declared it, because it was earned abroad. But such leakage could be stopped; hence the change to "military protection." When the faithful old English commissioner of customs, one of whose duties it was to stop all opium and confiscate it, made a move in that direction the soldiers threatened to kill him. He wired Peking for instructions and was told to let the matter go. Up to little more than a decade ago opium traffic was

legal, and the maritime customs got much revenue from it. Now that it is outlawed there is far more opium and no revenue. The customs men take the attitude that after all they are there to collect duties for the Chinese Government, or at least for its foreign creditors, and that with no revenue accruing to their service from it opium is outside their sphere. Thus one might stroll down to a public pier and see great boxes of the stuff, in soft masses like treacle, some of them open for inspection or for some other purpose, under soldier guards for once sharp-eyed, and behold customs men quite unable to discern it; one might see members of the outdoor staff letting an empty steamer leave a *pai* as "cleared for Wuchow" and gazing absently at an identical craft flying a military flag as it steamed past in the wake of the other, heavily laden with opium that all the city knew was to be reloaded on the cleared boat just out of sight down-stream. If one showed surprise that a customs man made no effort to halt boxes of opium passing his very door on the way from one steamer to another he was reminded that the maritime customs of China "do not function on land."

In the past year the customs officers at Nanning had seized between eight and ten ounces of opium! For they were meticulous in examining all incoming and outgoing boats—*except* those under military protection—even searching the persons of the politically impotent rank and file of Chinese travelers, peering inside their little wooden or porcelain pillows. How many tons of the stuff passed under their noses during the same period no one ventures to guess. There is supposed to be a quarterly public burning of seized opium and paraphernalia. Sometimes there still is; but what little is seized is hardly worth getting out all the officials, who are themselves opium-smokers, and generally opium-grafters, for the farce. The story in Nanning was that up to the time Sun Yat-sen upset business and ruined the province by his looting and raping expedition in September, 1921, commerce in opium was almost at a standstill, but that now the only way merchants could make both ends meet was by dealing in "big smoke." Foreign goods sent up to Nanning are really paid for in opium; the local Chinese agent for our great oil trust sold oil, put the money into opium, and sent it down the river under military protection; and that was the case with most of the big merchants or agents in town. Naturally the stuff was cheap—while it was selling at Hong Kong at \$14.50 an ounce, the Kwangsi price ranged around thirty cents—and was used by nearly every one in Nanning. Chair-coolies'

lay publicly smoking while waiting for fares; a Chinese customs man was dopy with the drug on the couch of the captain of the steamer he had been sent out to keep free of it; most faces showed the opium-smoker's half-dissipated, half-brutalized expression; even the governor indulged in it.

China's opium battle, which culminated in victory in 1915, has to be fought over again under harder conditions. To-day the southwestern provinces alone are estimated to produce 10,000 tons of it yearly. The "model governor" of Shansi Province has established "curing-houses" where thousands are supposed to be cured of the habit; otherwise there is virtually no official opposition to the traffic. Since the enormous armies which rival rulers gather about them depend upon it for their livelihood, the opposition to suppression is now prodigious, for it is both personal and official. Civil and military governors are determined to maintain opium taxes, and consequently cultivation, for on this depends the pay of their armies, and they have no other adequate means of purchasing arms and munitions and laying up their own personal fortunes in foreign banks. In the last few years such a surplus of opium has been grown that its very cheapness is making the habit almost universal among the masses of many parts of China. In the southwestern provinces people smoke opium as openly as tobacco, in public buildings and conveyances, the houses of the gentry, the yamens of the officials. Opium-shops do business as frankly as rice-shops, and most officials cannot be seen at opium-smoking hours or before midday. It is hard to realize that opium is supposedly prohibited by the most severe penalties. Almost every province has its opium monopolies, some straightforward, the great majority under the veil of "fines" by a "suppression bureau" that are really excessive taxes imposed by local militarists on poppy lands, wholesale dealers, opium-shops, the smokers themselves, and the transportation of the drug. Several other provinces besides Kwangsi forbid the growing of poppies but allow opium to be imported from other provinces, and have long lists of regulations, that as much as possible may be made out of the business and that smuggling and "illicit" traffic be kept at a minimum. The export duties are as high as the local militarists wish to make them, with no hindrance by the foreign powers that are supposed to regulate China's duties. In many parts of China the opium tax is collected for months, often for years, in advance, and the peasants have no choice but to grow poppies, for nothing else will repay them. Some do not even plant after paying



the tax, not out of personal integrity but lest a sudden return of the law again make it a capital offense. Others plant poppies between the rows of other crops, partly to hide them for a while, partly so that if the secret orders are suddenly reversed there will be something left. Public proclamations against planting come out at the same time as secret orders to plant; conditions vary not merely by provinces but by *hsien*, and what is a poor peasant, taxed years in advance and with rulers often changing every month or so, to do?

Beware of the professions of reform. The shouts of the Chinese before the League of Nations that opium traffic must be suppressed often mean nothing more than that they wish to cut down competition so that they and their cronies can get rich from China-grown poppies. Of course England, France, Portugal, Holland, Japan, and several other powers are guilty as charged of keeping up the opium traffic with China. but all of them together do not now bring the Chinese half as much as the Chinese grow themselves. In the hope of impressing the League of Nations or the world at large Chinese are sent out to "uproot" the poppies, which in most cases means that the investigators get a squeeze for letting them alone, if indeed they really dare go into the districts where the stuff is grown; or they do their investigating at a convenient season, when none could be grown, and come back to report that none is growing. The governors know that they are violating the law and the treaties; at least one of them begins his regulations with the preamble, "In order to avoid foreign interference a formal declaration of strict opium prohibition shall be made," and farther on in the same document he calls upon officials of every civil and military grade to make the monopoly as great a success as possible. In short, China's opium problem is very much like our liquor problem, if to our present difficulties were added that the officers of our regular army, of the reserves, the National Guard, and any one else capable of doing so had each gathered about him a private army and were violating the prohibition laws to the full extent of his ability in order to raise funds for carrying on warfare with his rivals. Well, at least opium is a useful check upon overpopulation.

Though the first moon of the Year of the Rat was full, which meant that the month was half gone, Nanning was still celebrating New Year's on my second night there. Fire-crackers exploded in long strings every few moments; lantern processions of boats covered the river; and the next morning all Nanning and the surrounding villages were

streaming down both sides of the Si-kiang and upon it in all manner of craft from sampans to surreptitiously borrowed launches of foreign corporations to Tung Tze village, just across the river not far below the capital. One's conclusion that western Kwangsi is lightly populated and its capital small hardly outlived the sight of the mobs pouring in unbroken lines from all points of the compass, endless files of villagers converging on the place of festivities like spokes upon the hub of a wheel; sampans, military steamers, house-boats, floating restaurants, "flower-boats" with gaily dressed young harlots, gambling-boats rattling with mah-jongg, families in their movable homes, every known manner of vender of every known kind of wares, every Chinese species of craft—it was as if the whole swarming boat-life of Nanning were moving down to the village. All day the surface of the river, dead the day before, was alive with crawling water life; it was almost a general exodus, leaving hardly any one but the few foreigners to run the town. The sixteenth day of the first moon (February 20 by our reckoning) was the festival day of the thunder-god, it transpired, the "birthday of a big joss," my host's interpreter put it, the last of the New Year's leisure before the long Sundayless stretch ahead.

In the middle of the morning the *Far Key* suddenly sped away without warning, for all the comprador's promises. My host assured me that I could catch it around the corner that night, but I insisted on taking no chances, so that his launch raced after it and set me aboard. The comprador assured me we were off. So we were—for about two miles. Then just around the bend below the capital the *Far Key* anchored. When I had waited an hour or more I asked as a special favor and a new experience to be given some real information, whereupon the comprador, with a smile as crooked as his mandarin, intensely amused inwardly no doubt that any one should be so simple as not to know the tricks of Kwangsi's opium traffic, exuded the thought, "Well, if you are on board by three in the morning you will probably not be left behind."

I had myself set ashore and was not sorry for the delay, for not only was the center of the thunder-god celebration within walking distance, but this was the only bright summer day I had between Indo-China and Canton. The French word *fourmiller* seems the only one sufficient to express the flocking of people at one of these Chinese outdoor celebrations in honor of a "big joss"; no Occidental crowd can begin to equal in density and mobility such a gathering, literally like the swarm-

ing of ants, of bees about an alighted queen. Inside his temple the thunder-god lay buried under gaudy paper and false flowers, in an air unbreathable with the incense burned by constantly arriving hundreds of worshipers. An important part of every festival in China, though its basis is religious, is a theatrical performance, sometimes provided by the town, sometimes by a wealthy citizen, perhaps even by priests who wish a big attendance of the fee-paying pious. Under a great banyan-tree, actors stripped to the waist, with long beards, and togas on their shoulders, strutted the creaking improvised stage before an audience as unbroken as the nap on a carpet, a mass of humanity filling the space between the door of the all but impassable temple and the further confines of hearing and seeing as water fills a lake—or shall we say as its contents fill a mud-hole? The screech of one-string fiddles, the squeak of falsetto voices, the miming of mimers not of the first magnitude in their constellations, went on hour after hour. All manner of food and drink and other things screamed for consumption from endless lanes of booths in county-fair style; little children in gay bonnets with devilish faces on them to scare off the devils; girls in brand-new costumes of light blue, of pale green, of any light hue short of pure white, the color of mourning; women in black, brown, gray, in most cases with broad red bands crisscrossing their full breasts, for it is an advantage of Chinese women over their Occidental sisters that the call of a fair can be heeded by tying the baby on mother's back and away; canals and rice-water ponds mirrored endless files of Celestial humanity passing along their flagstone edges. Formal processions included gaudy floats of all descriptions, varnished roast pigs held religiously aloft, men in amusing fancy dress mounted on small horses, the familiar flour-faced, pipe-smoking Oriental caricature of an Englishman among them, dragons twenty men long, scores of dreadful creatures unknown to the natural history of our matter-of-fact world of the West, and probably not so terrifying as outward appearances implied, harmless, perhaps as the savage monkey who raised his mask at sight of my kodak and disclosed a simple grinning coolie face.

Toward four the homeward trek began and all the procession of junks and sampans and their myriad Chinese relatives came leisurely wandering up-stream again, the spokes of the wheel reappeared and trailed off into the descending dusk, but big kerosene lamps were lighted on the improvised stage, and there was every evidence that the performance would go on into the night. I went back to that one of

the Bund homes where the dominoes and lemonade were scheduled for that evening, to be met with "I told you so." Late that night I was again set on board the *Far Key*, and next morning I found that I might have come much later still. For though we did begin to move toward sunrise we did not fully get off. Whether it was because the stuff had arrived too late or that caution was necessary, neither of which was likely, we stopped again two or three hours down the river to take from a junk we had been towing a ton or more of opium. Probably it was merely because shallows in the now very low river made it impossible for the steamer to pass fully loaded.

It had been my luck to get one of the best of the West River steamers, though that is no high superlative. The thing was about sixty feet long and had three decks, only one of which was really entitled to that name. On the lower one, barely above the water-level, was piled and heaped and tumbled all manner of cargo, its interstices filled with coolie passengers and boat people off duty cramped into all manner of what to Westerners would be very uncomfortable positions. The great bulk of the cargo was opium, with aniseed in grass-mat bales bigger than full mail-sacks, their two similarly sickly sweetish scents pungently mixed. Though anisette commonly comes from France, Kwangsi Province produces most of the world's aniseed. At the back of this deck, connected with the bow by an unrailed passageway a foot wide on the outside of the boat along which the boatmen walked and poled, was a place to cook, closely flanked by two conveniences outdoing in filthiness anything mere words can express. Of the habits of the half-dozen discards from the human garbage-heap who worked there, how they dipped water from the river in the same buckets they used for slops and even filth, of the unutterable condition of their few utensils and of the cooking style in general, I shall only say that I have nothing to gain by nauseating the reader.

The main deck was, in the Chinese sense, cleaner; at least it was not oozing and running and slimy and slippery with dripping water and worse and with the residue of chicken slaughterings. In front was a little bow where one could sometimes sit, though it was nearly always in use by the boatmen for their various manoeuvres. The captains, of whom there seemed to be several, the comprador, the supercargoes, and the higher members of the crew were so crowded in their cabin-office and cubbyholes all about the armored wheel-house

just back of this that I never saw one of them fully stretched out during the journey. The engine-crew must have filled the armored engine-room at night, and there seemed to be several times as many boatmen as were necessary, but the Chinese are experts both at making the most of space and at finding a job for one more man, even as there is always room somewhere for one more bundle or one more passenger. Immediately behind the captain's quarters, and just as suddenly in front of the democratic common room to which we shall come in due season, there were two of what the Chinese consider cabins. Here the Celestial who wished his wife's services en route must install himself or be separated from her throughout the journey. The only reasons I had not taken one of these were that I could not possibly have squeezed a cot into it, that the inset wooden platforms serving as beds in them were insufficient in every direction, that it would have been stuffy, malodorous, and noisy with the adjoining captain's cabins, that I should have been crowding out two or three Chinese capable of crowding into it, that according to the comprador, they were both already spoken for by other travelers when I first came on board in Nanning, and throughout the trip they were packed full of opium and other paying cargo belonging to the captain and the crew. There was a somewhat larger cabin tucked in somewhere at this forward end, with two cross bunks and two fore and aft and a table on which to eat and play mah-jongg, but even there I could not have crowded in a cot endwise, crosswise, or sidewise; it served as a common passageway although there was no room to pass, and it was already occupied by several prosperous merchants. On the whole I had decided to take to the common room.

The cabin passage was not expensive; the fare in the main room was ludicrously low for the time the trip consumed, though perhaps not for the distance covered or the comforts involved. The central space of the main deck was a room of oval shape, perhaps ten by twenty feet, with four end bunks and four on each side, all double-deckers, making a total of twenty-four. The bunks were shallow wooden boxes, devoid of even the reed mat commonly masquerading as mattress. A board, a quilt, and a porcelain pillow, inside which he places minor valuables, such as tobacco and matches, is all the Chinese asks to be comfortable as the proverbial bug in a rug, and each traveler carried his own *pukai*, a cross between a quilt and a blanket, wrapped in a mat and with such extra clothes as he may possess rolled in it. Thus those who made their beds on the bare floor instead of in the

bunks were exactly as well off; nay, even better, for they were not so cramped and crowded and they paid even less. In lieu of the twenty-four men for whom there were bunks, a full sixty filled the space completely from wall to wall. There was a man under as well as in each bunk; two men lay on the floor outside each lengthwise bunk, and ten or more men were stacked in among and more or less on top of these during the night and most of the day, while from midnight to dawn the boat servants lay down in the six-inch alleyways between the floored bodies. By day all who had occasion to go from one end of the craft to the other set down their feet in the same scanty spaces. Baskets, suit-cases made of reeds, cardboard, and similar cheap and perishable materials, some of them veritable trunks, and a pawnshop display of multifarious bundles hung from big hooks in a ceiling already so low that my cap scraped it, and among them swung a man in a hammock amid umbrellas and canes; for some of the passengers were well-to-do merchants and men of fashion. As if this were not enough, nearly every man had stowed into his own scanty space matting-wrapped bundles and a thousand odds and ends around which he wrapped himself like a sleeping snake. I had taken a bunk myself, not because I hoped to be able or wished to occupy it, but because, my cot being set up in front of it at a slightly higher level, it served as a shelf in which to put my belongings, and my clothing when not on my back, and gave me a little more breathing-space. Without it I should have been reduced to the Chinese custom of sleeping with my baggage, for men lay under the sides of my cot and two had thrust themselves entirely under it between the X legs.

The women were even more crowded, unable even to lie down, on a colder, more open raised poop out over the unspeakable kitchen, larder, and two filth-holes, their floor a heavy wooden grating without even a matting above the churning screws that often tossed a splash of water in upon them. Every other corner of the boat was just as packed with goods and humanity, except what might be called third deck, which was really the roof. By a gymnastic feat one could shinny up and find room for a few steps among the piles of wood, baskets of chickens, of roosters that were always crowing when one wished to sleep, two-story crates of pigeons, four-story ones of quail, several beautiful pheasants in tiny wicker cages, baskets of eggs, oranges, tangerines, laichees, a large and a smaller wild monkey subject to savage dashes, and a dog-kennel into which the half-dozen soldiers sent along to protect us crawled by necessity on hands and knees. There

I used to walk and watch the scenery moving slowly up-stream, but no one else did, except the boatmen whose work required it. Many of the passengers never got up during the whole five-day trip except to eat twice a day at the table which servants managed somehow to put together and crowd into our common room.

Luckily I could push open a tiny window under my bunk, for the sweetish stink of opium was incessant and all-pervading. Every one, except perhaps half a dozen strong-minded passengers, smoked the stuff,—captains, comprador, rich merchants, gaunt coolies, even the women. The electric lights blazed all night long, the boatmen were constantly shrieking, the passengers forever chattering, the roosters always crowing, and the stench of opium was always with us. Every morning the servants brought us boiling water in the wash-basins which every passenger above the coolie class carries in China, and my fellow-passengers washed face and hands and often feet in it, but brushed their teeth and noisily rinsed their mouths from a cup of cold water dipped directly from the river and brought in the center of the filled basin. The better class of Chinese are almost meticulous about this morning ablution, but even the well-trained servant of foreigners can never understand why the outside barbarian prefers to reverse the process and insist on boiled water for drinking and gargling purposes rather than for his ablutions. If the invisible spirits of disease lurk in water, as thousand of foreigners have struggled in vain for decades to convince millions of Chinese, why is unboiled water any less fatal to the skin than to the stomach?

My eating, reading, writing, dressing, washing, and shaving—with the “little hoe,” as a passenger dubbed my safety-razor—in fact every motion I made, down to the use of a handkerchief, was a never-ceasing show to all on board, and the congestion about my cot was often an unbroken wall of unwinking eyes and gaping mouths through which a fly could hardly have found its way. The foreigner who has traveled for two years among the Chinese masses ought never again to have stage-fright. Yet there was never a suggestion of unfriendliness, of conscious ill manners. The Chinese have their faults, but no crowd of Americans could have lived in such cramped quarters for days and nights with such equanimity as prevailed here, with never a harsh word, never so much as a jostling of the outside barbarian who took up twice his share of the precious space with the queer bed which seemed so unnecessary. There was a sick man here

and there, some no doubt with easily communicable, perhaps fatal, diseases, but cheerfulness was universal and never broken.

The heartlessness of the Chinese is as striking as are their patience and good nature under discomforts. Boats crawled up-stream everywhere, along the shore, as on the Amazon, but here the men, and women, stood facing forward, sometimes four in a row in one small boat, and manipulated long oars, instead of shoveling water with a paddle. Galley-slaves bent double over their tow-ropes strained westward along the high, steep banks that had been gashed and perforated in fantastic shapes by the high waters of centuries. One morning a young and an old man, probably father and son, were toiling along the face of this, twenty feet above the stream, on a tow-rope that stretched to the top of the mast of a junk farther out in the stream than our steamer. Our boatmen shouted rather feebly at them, but they were engrossed in their toil, and as our craft made no effort to avoid it, the tow-rope caught on the steamer's smoke-stack. The old man went heels over head down the steep bank, and probably was killed, for he had not moved ten minutes later when I saw the last of him, the youth sitting disconsolately beside him. Our crew coiled up and stole the long woven-bamboo rope that had parted at both ends, nonchalantly as if such things were as familiar to them as the stars and stripes falsely flapping day and night at our stern, and against which no doubt such episodes add new grievances.

We moved with that exasperating leisureliness common to the East, towing a junk even more crowded with passengers and piled still higher with cargo, mainly opium; and wherever there were rapids this was cast off and abandoned to its own devices, while we went on to wait for it below the difficult passage, sometimes for hours. Sixteen men stood facing the bow on the forward half of this overladen craft and rowed galley-fashion in perfect unison, a picturesque sight as they sped down swift shallows to rejoin us. Often the steamer itself went aground. Then all our crew would drag out great bamboo poles with crutch heads and walk horizontally, sometimes half upside down, along the foot-wide passageways on the outside of the steamer, pushing as if all the evil spirits of the Chinese imagination were after them, spending unbroken hours in the hardest physical exertion known to the human race, yet all the time shrieking incessantly at the top of their lungs "to let out the bad air." Chinese boatmen seem to need no "bo's'n" to urge them on. They work leisurely when they can,



like the devil when they must, and the fear of losing their jobs in a land where there is always an oversupply of labor is evidently all the compulsion needed. Now and again we passed a modern galley, six, eight, ten rowers standing at long oars fastened with woven-bamboo tholes and toiling with all the strength that rice can give. If a flurry of wind sprang up bat-winged junks quickly took the place of these sluggish drains on man-power, but never for long. Ours was a floating palace compared to the hobbling old wrecks of steamers, some towing as many as six junks, past which we steamed amid much jocularly between the respective but not respectful crews, varying according to caste from dignified humor to silliness. Sometimes our whole expedition stopped to row a coolie ashore, or to pick up sampans and load most of our cargo into them in order to pass a shallow place, and then to reload below it. Our armed guards never left the opium, but transferred with it to these smaller boats and returned with it to the steamer. There was no head-work, no dovetailing of tasks to increase our speed. Instead of towing these helping craft a few miles and reloading from it after we had tied up for the night we reloaded until dark and then had to remain where we were until morning. But patience is one thing that can be learned from the Chinese.

The towns we tied up at daily on the way down the West River were dismally alike, typical of a thousand others. Wing-shun, reached toward sunset of the first gloomy day, after we had lost most of the afternoon unloading and reloading at a shallow, looked like a mere row of huts along the shore. But after dark I found endless flagstone walks among ponds and rice-fields, and a city wall on top of which a delightful grassy stroll brought me out to an old pagoda and a great relief from the constant staring uproar and the stink of opium. The stillness of the night was absolute; this was the only time I can recall in all my travels in China when not even the dogs discovered I was in town, so that there were no Chinese to follow or gather in the streets below and stare up at me. What was left of the population seemed to be carousing in the tumble-down superstructures of the city gates and gambling in a group or two in the main street.

We were off at daylight, but there were several rapids, and we tied up at two in the afternoon at a place variously known as Wangchow and Hengchow, the boatmen alleging that there were rapids and bandits ahead that made the early halt obligatory. Along the inside slope of the city wall, where paths always meander, turnips, cut in slices, were spread out in thousands to dry, pickled forms of

these being a principal viand in those parts. The sameness of Chinese towns is as depressing as are the minds of their inhabitants. Nothing could feel older than these moldering old river-side "cities" braced up along the edge of the Si-kiang. A crowded, filthy fore-street stretches along the outside of an aged wall, covered with wandering cow-paths inside the parapets, encircling a shrunken collection of a few slimy lanes of disgusting commerce, the principal one roofed with rotting mats, old coolie hats, flat baskets beyond any other use, everything that can keep out the sunshine we never saw; slab-slippery narrow ways crawl through dark gates and wander aimlessly away by narrower paths on paddy-dikes along which jog by day broken lines of peasants of both sexes. Most of the space within is taken up by vegetable-gardens, mainly tended by women whose rough bare feet have escaped binding, by a pond or two, a few magnificent old trees, banians and the like, about some ruined shrine or temple; on the walls a few hovels serve as pestiferous nests of beggars and no doubt of thieves; swarming children rivaling in habits and appearance the pigs they root among, staring, open-mouthed adults, never a suggestion of cleanliness, of newness, of initiative or originality, a deadly sameness of communities even more dismal than a glimpse across them suggests. Other towns like aged afterthoughts cluster outside the gates and crawl close along the outside of the wall, on which the hum of a few telegraph wires that are almost certain to be out of order is the only thing, unless it be a building or two of Catholic or Protestant missionaries, to suggest that these are modern rather than pre-Christian days. Broken mud bricks and cheap pottery lie everywhere, as if several cities had already been destroyed here; a few birds, perhaps a wind whispering in the trees and the banana-plants and the jungled inner edge of the wall, in the market streets raucous voices always too loud and badly strained, a distant group of children screaming, boy soldiers torturing aged bugles, and in the distance in any direction low hills pock-marked with the last resting-places of countless earlier generations of these same sad specimens of humanity.

Our floating opium-den was off about four each morning, long after the cocks on the roof and along the runway outside my miniature window had started their endless chorus, for another gloomy day, cold as February. Never before nor since have I seen such constant deadly dull weather without any actual rain; not a glimpse of the sun did I have in all Kwangsi, except that single fête-day in Nanning; day after day was as dark and gloomy as during a total eclipse of the sun or the last moments before a thunder-storm.

Three hours below Wangchow the river bristled with jagged rocks among which the river swirled in dangerous rapids where we waited nearly three hours for our tow. But by noon we were evidently past such difficulties, for our junk put out a huge rudder-oar, such as I had seen on the Min in Fukien, but this time at the front of the boat, and we plowed on against a strong head wind that no doubt awakened varying sensations on board the many rowing, sailing, and tracking craft we passed. Some plump brown hills more or less lightly wooded appeared now and then during the last two days, but there was little scenery worthy the name compared to that above Nanning. Peasants male and female were plowing little patches on the shores; men and boys stood thigh-, sometimes even waist-deep in the cold water tossing out and pulling in nets with the endless expressionless patience of the East; families of beggars paddled out to us in miraculously floating things that had once long ago been boats and got the leavings of our kitchen and a stick or two of wood that in such weather seemed more precious than food. Not only do the beggars of China go out of their way to appear poverty-stricken when on duty, but they do not confine themselves to the cities and principal routes of travel. Like the mosquitos one finds swarming in uninhabited jungles where the chances of nourishment seem scanty, Chinese beggars risk their lives in the most unpromising places. If there were a road to Hades through China it would undubitably be lined with mendicants all the way to the red-hot gates; or, if the popularity of such a road makes that a poor comparison, let the grass-grown trail from a politicians' club to heaven encroach upon Celestial territory, and the beggars of China would by no means scorn it.

The fourth day was Sunday and without rapids, but as cold and dull as ever, and even less notable for progress. Since the Chinese have no week, unless they have taken it from missionaries, Moham-medans, or Jews, the officers of the *Far Key* could scarcely have recognized the day and decided to make only a Sabbath-day journey, but they tied up at noon at Kweiping, larger perhaps but still another identical town hanging over the banks of the West River, and declined to go on again. Of course the real reason was not the one the captain gave me, that he had to spend the afternoon paying *likin*, and that there was no place within reach before nightfall that was safe from bandits, for we passed several large towns next morning. The true causes for the delay were the theater, the gambling, and even less innocent forms of Chinese recreation which Kweiping offered, in com-

bination with opportunities for private business in the various articles the boatmen had brought down river with them or could buy here for sale still farther below. Not merely the captains but the crew did their own trading, stopping wherever and as long as they wished, for that or any other personal desire, a custom at which owners are forced to wink and keep silent, as at that of employees' occupying most of the "cabins" for their own debauches or with their private stock. My fellow-passengers were much amused at my lack of Oriental sloth and my hurry to get on.

Perhaps I malign the place, but the most interesting thing I found in Kweiping was a hat. No doubt the French priest of Kweiyuan, where we had spent the afternoon and the night before, who had looked like Faust in his old age in the cobwebbed chamber in which he offered the usual home-made wine and native cigars, had a full attendance at mass that Sunday morning; but the large Protestant chapel to which I was drawn by the brave singing of hymns as I wandered the uninviting streets of Kweiping had in it hardly more worshipers than the three American missionaries who were entertaining them. I might have pushed on alone but for the opportune exit of the male missionary in his unusual head-gear, not merely the only derby I remember seeing in China but the most dilapidated I ever saw anywhere, the "jungles" of our hobos not even excepted, a hat that to all appearances had been trampled underfoot by a dozen mobs, yet which still manfully did its duty in this outpost of civilization where new derbies are not easily purchased. Recalling the case of the foreigner who could take out his teeth and lay them aside for the night, I instantly had the suspicion that the people of Kweiping would identify foreigners as those who wore this form of melon-shaped head-gear with the Satsuma cracks in it, and that they no doubt looked forward to the time when, if they were pro-foreign, they could get one like it, if anti-barbarian, to the happy day when they could demolish such an eyesore still more completely. My suspicions were confirmed; for as I strolled into one of the score of gambling-dens, the standing-room-only aspect and the blazing lights of which were the only evidences of prosperity in Kweiping, some one wished to know whether I was of the Yeh-ssu-t'ang or the Fu-ying-t'ang, that is, Catholic or Protestant missionary, to which a bright young fellow replied quickly that any fool could see I was neither, since I wore a cap.

However, the head under the cracked derby was sound enough, which in some circles is considered more important. While we strolled

together the missionary found time to give me a glimpse of his work and his problems. Kweiping was still in the Dark Ages. Among other things the "chicken test" was still applied; a Christian convert on the other side of town had been found guilty by means of it—interpretation by a wizard from the condition of the entrails of a slaughtered fowl—and when he escaped from prison after a considerable confinement he had to flee the town, abandoning all his possessions, his ancestral graves, and his boyhood memories. A broken old man was watchman for the mission, at fifteen Canton cents a day. He had never married because he had spent all his money to help his brother buy wives until the family line was assured, and now they had all abandoned him. A man of Kweiping died, and his two brothers offered his wife for sale among the other chattels, as by Chinese law and custom they have the right to do. Even the woman's mother could not halt the proceedings, and the brothers-in-law got thirty dollars for her from a passing merchant in need of a concubine. Another woman's husband died before she had borne him a son. Her sister had five children, of whom two or three were boys, and she was forced to give one of these to the sonless widow so that the dead husband would have some one to perform the ancestral rites. Later the real mother's other sons all died, but she not only could not get her son back to worship at the grave of his real father but could get no support from him in her old age. Lawsuits are very common in China over sons or adopted sons, since female offspring is incapable of effective prayer at ancestral graves.

An American woman has established a school-refuge for blind girls in Kweiping. Native preachers and those who cannot afford to pay the usual price for a wife are glad to marry them after they have been taught to read Braille, to write a bit, to know the Bible, and to sew, which many country girls with good eyes cannot do. One day a mother up river who had heard of the strange foreigners brought her blind daughter to them. The Chinese assistants told her that the American woman would not be back for three or four days and that she made it an absolute rule not to let them accept new girls while she was away, but that the child would undoubtedly be taken in if she would bring her back a week or so later. The mother started home with the child, but on the way she said to herself, "Why should I keep and feed for another week a girl who is not useful to me and whom I cannot marry off?" Thereupon she threw the daughter into the river. A boatman picked her up and sold her to a "flower-boat" for two dollars.

The traveler marooned in Kweiping can take a long walk in the jungle without getting off the city wall, passing a few vistas of almost Venetian façades falling into intramural ponds that are almost lakes, or a stroll in the country without going outside it. There are low mountains close behind it, too, and I passed the afternoon not unpleasantly in a tramp up into the foot-hills, graves climbing with me as far as I could go, trotting files of coolies even here. Women, children, and old men of Kweiping carried fire-baskets with clay-pot bottom filled with burning charcoal to warm themselves, hanging them in front or back just under their jackets in a way to make them look as if they were for some less decent purpose. Fuel is so costly that they can only afford to use it in this small concentrated way. A few old wrecks of sedan-chairs roamed the town, the first I had seen since reëntering China, the pairs of men bearing them almost as miserable as the broken-down old coolies who still jogged the slimy streets under atrocious loads.

We were off long before dawn next morning, either to make up for the delay or because the crew had just finished its night's debauch, and with two or three halts at *likin* stations and one to unload opium we hurried on all through a raw damp day that made the monkeys on our upper deck personifications of misery. Somewhere about Kweiyuan or Kweiping old stone watch-towers loopholed for rifles began to appear, suggesting that river-pirates are no mere episode of to-day in China. Nearing Wuchow the West River is dotted, clear across the stream and in two places for some distance, with curious pyramidal piles of stone, some of the groups ahead looking in this thick weather like rows of sail-boats. No one with whom I spoke could tell me the reason for them, though one suggested that they were probably the graves of pirates, built in their memory by surviving colleagues. Where a pagoda stands high on one of two hills not far above Wuchow there had until recently been a great nest of bandits, who used to fire on boats that had not paid tribute. Now the steamer scorned even to put up the hinged armor-plate about the pilot-house, though not much later this was in great demand again. The object of the pirates is to kill or drive out the pilots so that the boat will go on the rocks and become easy looting.

Wuchow was almost in sight when we stopped for two hours to unload all our opium into large junks in charge of several well-dressed, long-finger-nailed men, the soldiers transferring with it. Under mil-

itary flags the shipment would go down into Wuchow markets or on to Canton, with a price-increase for every mile from its next-to-nothing cost in Posey, while the *Far Key* sneaked innocently up to a wharf without molestation from the maritime customs.

A treaty-port with its due quota of foreign business men as well as missionaries, Wuchow is the most important place on the West River, not even excepting the capital of the province on the extreme eastern edge of which it hovers. Like almost all large river-towns in China it is built in the angle between the main river and a branch. Sun Yat-sen had told us that the journey down the Fu from Kweilin to Wuchow, a very long trip, possible only at certain seasons because of the many rapids, and now overrun with pirates, is the most beautiful in China; but the traveler always hears that of the places he fails to see. Besides, with all due humility and respect, Sun Yat-sen saw very little of China; he had good reasons for often preferring other countries. Great numbers of boats fill the mouth of the Fu at Wuchow, where smuggling is an important calling. Across it is a hill given over to missions and to the British consulate, even then in the act of being abandoned to make the absence of official foreign representatives unanimous. An old wall surrounds the lesser part of the city, its narrow main street just as slimy as any other; but no one who has seen a thousand other Chinese cities need hang long about Wuchow.

Barely had the real steamer for Hong Kong let go its grip on a wharf at three next afternoon than I found myself back in Kwangtung Province and speeding into the great delta of rivers and pirates below Canton. The British captain of this boat also was killed on a trip not much later, a valuable cargo looted, and all the wealthy among the passengers carried off for ransom. But I have long been accustomed to have peace and quiet settle down over any district while I am passing through it. Business men possessed of expense-accounts go from Wuchow to Canton by way of Hong Kong; those of us less favored can make the journey in half the time and at a third the expense by abandoning the Wuchow steamer at Samshui in the middle of the night, being rowed ashore, walking a mile or two, and waiting until dawn for the train that sets one down two hours later across the Pearl River from the western suburb.

## CHAPTER XV

### SOME GENERAL ASPECTS OF CHINESE LIFE

**A**S even the reader may be weary of constant travel, suppose we sit down for a few pages and glance at some of the general aspects of things Chinese, more or less true in all parts of that vast hive of humanity we call China. The summing up can do no worse than waste our time even though those with the habit of reflecting as they read, or of now and then reading between the lines, may have found all these things imbedded in the long and perhaps sometimes dreary course of this simple tale of random wandering.

It will start no new and bitter controversy, I trust, if we begin with the highly original premise that there are reasons for everything, whether or not they have all been run to earth. Even the often astounding customs, bad habits, and racial vices of the Chinese no doubt have their reasons, and if one scratch one's scalp deeply enough, or transfer the operation to another head of greater depth or less density, some hint of the relationship between cause and effect may peer through. Thus it is almost obvious that many Chinese smoke opium when they can get it not merely because the East has none of that Western religion of keeping the body fit but because any one living under ordinary Chinese circumstances would be glad to surrender to anything that would make him sometimes forget his surroundings. Coolies shriek rather than talk when anything serious is involved because they have learned through crowded generations that there is no other sure way of making themselves heard and taken account of above the uproar of their myriad fellows. The Chinese riot about ticket-windows and fight to get on and off trains on which there may be ample room, because centuries of experience have given them the instinctive feeling that there are always too many persons for any given space. Thus we might go on indefinitely. An American-born Chinese in the Canton Government accused the West of misjudging the Chinese because we see only the surface of their lives and know nothing of what is underneath. For example, he specified, Westerners think



the Chinese are cruel and heartless because they often leave a wounded or a dying man lying in the road and pass by on the other side, like the Pharisee and the publican of old—who probably had equally good Oriental reasons. What we do not know, he added, is that laws many centuries old make it dangerous to play the good Samaritan in China, since any one caught near an injured or dead person was at once seized as the assassin, or at least as an accomplice; and once they had a culprit the authorities did not lose much sleep over making sure that it was the right one. Though he did not explain whether this condition augmented what seems to the foreigner the natural heartlessness of the Chinese or whether he was born, uncounted centuries ago, with less pity in his make-up than the West seems to feel coursing through its veins—which might explain the willingness to let it go at a possibly innocent culprit—my almond-eyed fellow-countryman did go on to cite other superficial judgments by foreigners, and to give rational explanations for the conditions we misjudge.

Scientists tell us that the male and female of any given species both have the same organs, but that these are merely developed or undeveloped to different degrees in the two sexes. The same may be said of the characteristics of the Chinese and those of the West. Much travel teaches nothing if it does not show that all the races of humanity are essentially alike, that mankind everywhere has much the same qualities. The diversities which at times seem so marked are merely degrees of development of universal traits under differing circumstances. Thus through many thousands of years of dissimilar conditions and history the Chinese have developed characteristics that with us remained undeveloped, and vice versa, until to-day we seem as widely separated from them as man is from woman.

Hence it comes about that though lists of the things which the Chinese “do backward” have been given in abundance, it has not so often been noted that it is just as likely that our Western ways are “backward”; in other words that neither the man nor the woman may be doing a thing any the less correctly for doing it differently. The Chinese call the compass which the world generally admits it owes to them the “point-south pin”; scientists have never proved beyond question that the force which draws the needle is at the North Pole rather than at the South. Chinese women wear trousers, while the men often wear long gowns; which is really best suited to the supposedly modest sex? We laugh at the Chinese because they put the family name first and follow it with the individual names; yet we

hasten to adopt the Chinese method when there come up such practical matters as making directories or telephone-books. It's all in the point of view; the Chinese see in the full moon, not a face, but an old man chopping down a tree—and they are as right in what they say as we are. Two policemen strolling down Broadway hand in hand, as their Chinese prototypes may often be seen doing, would excite at least mild comment; but a man and a woman doing the same thing in China would cause even greater scandal. The Chinese greeting most nearly corresponding to our "How do you do?" is "Have you eaten rice?" Can any bright little boy prove that one is more absurd than the other? We take leave with some such expression as, "Well, I must be trotting along"; the Chinese adieu is "*Man tzow*—walk slowly." One may be as right as the other, but there is no question which is more dignified.

It is the different points of view in slight more than in important matters that make Chinese life so interesting to Occidentals, and also that cause unnecessary difficulties between the East and the West. Most of what foreigners consider Chinese bad manners is entirely unintentional, wholly unconscious, just as are many of what the Chinese consider our bad manners. To the Chinese, even of the coolie class, anger is the mark of the barbarian, a sort of brief madness frequent on the part of that permanent madman, that unbalanced fellow the Westerner seems to them. They look with much the same feeling toward us in our angry moods as we do at their incorrigible habit of gathering in crowds about a foreigner and staring fixedly at him with open mouths. I remember a Chinese youth of education who tried to explain to me that the Chinese do not get angry, or at least do not show anger, because they do not consider it worth while. He gave an example. A student on his way to school some days distant stopped at a wayside booth and paid ten cents for a bowl of rice. When the shopman called after him as he was leaving that he had not paid, he promptly paid again rather than begin a dispute and waste useless words that would put him on a level with the coolies about him. I fancy the reaction among most Westerners would be that we would not be "done," however small the amount, or that we would not let stand the implied insult that we were trying to get away without paying.

Unseemly haste is to the Chinese just as much the mark of the barbarian as anger. Even our impatiences disconcert him. The servant whose ingenuity astounds you in cooking a ten-course dinner over a

flower-pot or two, in finding materials sufficient to his purposes where no materials seem to exist, will lose all his wits and efficiency when you address him in impatient anger or try to hurry him beyond his available pace. Steadily, industriously, he will accomplish indefinitely, apparently immune to either mental or physical fatigue; but do not forget that he is still an Oriental, with no notion of time and racially incapable of hurrying. Why haste? *Ming-t'ien* is quite as potent an adage with him as the corresponding *mañana* is with the South American, not because he is indolent but because he is trained to take a calm view of life. But though he may not appreciate the value of getting from one place to another in the least possible time, the Chinese in the mass is not in a position to "take it easy." In his overpeopled land with its often hard climates and scanty opportunity only an incessant labor can sustain life, and the Chinese cannot let himself drift into the softening practices, the interminable dreamings, of the Hindu. With him work is as to the ants and bees, a function as natural and regular as respiration; and though he is likewise an Oriental, he is in many ways a most practical and common-sense member of the human race.

As a matter of fact the Celestial is no more free from anger than he is from "nerves," as most lists of his characteristics would have us believe. Probably his refusal to descend to anger without great provocation had its origin partly in the knowledge that this serves no useful purpose; and if he is less prone to show either anger or "nerves" than are we of the West, it is very likely because the crowded conditions under which he has lived for centuries have trained him to endure without suffering a great amount of the annoyances of undue propinquity, because all the forms of outward courtesy have been necessary to avoid serious friction. Your frontiersman who meets four persons a week, in a place where there is ample space for all of them, can be discourteous with less chance of unfortunate results than can the man who meets ten thousand harried rice-seekers an hour in a street four feet wide. Thus through the crowded centuries the Chinese seem to have evolved an unusual ability not to let annoying things annoy them; but to say that they have no "nerves" and no anger because they rarely show them is to step outside the constricted ring of exact truth. In fact, as if the repression under which they normally hold themselves had burst like an overfilled lake through the dam that holds it back, they sometimes break all bounds and frankly run amuck. The Chinese woman is normally modest and inconspicuous; but let her really get angry, lose control of the feelings she so com-

monly keeps suppressed, and she will outdo the world in continuous uproar and violent language, less blasphemous than incredibly filthy, reviling the recipient back to unknown generations. It is the bursting of constricted bounds that brings about in China what Dr. Arthur Smith calls "social typhoons," the same characteristic that on rare occasions turns into frenzied murderous mobs a people who normally seem quite incapable of violence. Hence the anti-foreign outbursts that now and then surprise even old residents.

Whether it is due to different endowments by nature or to centuries of crowded living, the Chinese long since outgrew the childish days of resorting to violence on every occasion and have learned that ignoring many things and passively resisting others are most effective in the end. The Chinese of to-day are naturally more peace-minded than the average of mankind; they do not go about with a chip on their shoulder. According to the limited definition of the word as it is used by the Western man in the street, they are cowardly; yet here, too, they can burst their bounds and prove themselves as brave as the Occidental, more indifferent to violent death. They would rather work than fight; not many nations would have gone to the immense labor of building the Great Wall, of stoutly walling thousands of cities, mainly to save themselves from fighting. During all the time we lived in Peking one bank-messenger was robbed and killed, though large sums of money are often carried about the streets of the capital in open view; yet during the first twenty days of February of that year the police of Peking furnished 467 coffins for persons starved or frozen to death in the city. Not many races would thus passively lie down and die rather than resort to violence. Yet there are bounds beyond which they cannot endure in this matter also; looting soldiers and ruthless bandits and pirates are but the overflow of a fierce economic struggle.

Even when it does occur, a Chinese fight is likely to be more amusing than bloody. Fists are virtually unknown, as in the Orient in general, while knives or other lethal weapons are vastly less in evidence than our Western romancers on Chinese subjects would have their simple readers and movie-goers believe. During more than two years of constant roving to and fro in China I may perhaps have seen a dozen clashes between pairs of Chinese individuals, and those were not fights in our Western sense, but oratorical quarrels. The Chinese fight mainly by shouting at each other, more often still by appealing to the gallery, orating to the by-standers instead of facing the opponent,



The Chinese are skilful in shutting out the rays of an ardent southern sun



Though this bridge could carry a modern truck, no wheelbarrow may cross under its own steam, lest evil spirits wreak vengeance



Though there are hotter places in China, it is the rickshaw-men of central Honan who have evolved a carriage-top that shades not only clients but the runners themselves



A lesson on how to hold your chop-sticks which would have failed if the victim had been able to recognize the business end of a camera

each striving to prove that he is right, or attempting by ridicule and originality in abusive language to make the other "lose face." Once that is accomplished, once a snicker of amusement, rising easily to a roar of laughter, has been won from the keenly humor-minded throng, the object of the hilarity has as definitely lost as if he had been floored by a ten-second knock-out. There is nothing left for him to do but sneak away down an alley and leave the winner to strut about among his admirers like a victorious rooster. Never did I see a drop of blood drawn in a Chinese dispute, almost never a real blow struck. Somewhere in the Far East there is a country where the first stranger encountered must settle a quarrel when called upon to do so, and the contestants must abide by his decision. The Chinese merely run to larger juries—and like the Latin-Americans they see no reason to stick to the umpire's award even when they have tacitly agreed to do so.

This matter of "losing face" is often given as a peculiarly Chinese characteristic. Criticize your dinner before others and your Chinese cook will probably come in an hour later with a letter in his hand—well aware, of course, that you cannot read it—and, with a face in which filial grief and an apparent distress at having to leave your beloved service are nicely mingled, will inform you that his father has just died and that he must return to the ancestral home at once. "*Wa di fuchin ssu-la*," is one of the expressions the foreign resident in China is most likely to learn; no American office-boy ever buried as many grandmothers during all his baseball seasons as the average Chinese servant to Westerners has interred fathers. He cannot bear the loss of face which semi-public criticism involves, nor can he steel himself to tell you frankly why he is leaving. But if you meet him next week emerging from the kitchen of another foreign resident in the next street, he will show no sign whatever of loss of face at being so visibly caught in a falsehood. Now, the American can lose face quite as decidedly and as painfully as the Chinese, even though he does not commonly use the expression; but the possible causes only here and there coincide. Thus the Celestials have many ways of losing face, but running away from a threatening man or any other danger is not one of them, whereas it is one of the surest ways for an American to suffer that fate.

Perhaps the question most often heard by the American returned from a sojourn in China is, "Are the Chinese honest?" The answer is

very simple, and exactly what would be the strictest truth with respect to every other branch of the human race,—yes and no. “The Chinese is the most dishonest man in the world!” stormed an American merchant we met early in our Chinese travels. “Give a five-dollar bill to a trusted Chinese clerk who has been for twenty years in the employ of your business rival and you can examine the private files of that rival in an easy-chair at your own house.” In China short-changing is a universal art; even large foreign business houses in the treaty-ports learn it. Buy a railroad ticket, a stamp, send a telegram, and you are almost certain to have a few “cash” or coppers scaled off the change that is returned to you, or added to the rate at which your money is accepted. The monetary chaos in China makes clear-cut money divisions impossible, and the ticket-agent or telegraph clerk feels he has as much right to augment his meager salary as has the district judge or the provincial governor. Chinese writers in foreign consulates find similar means of making both ends come more nearly to overlapping. For example, a Chinese exporter in the far interior gets a letter from a foreign consul telling him everything is in order for him to export the product in question to the consul’s homeland; but the Chinese writer who puts the letter into his own language drops into it a subtle hint to the provincial officials not to take the consul’s words literally unless the exporter does the right thing by those through whose hands the matter has passed. Thus business must not merely subsidize the Chinese hirelings without whom no large consulate can function, but in many cases the merchants fancy that it is the consul himself who is receiving the “squeeze” they hasten to furnish. The Chinese policemen in the foreign concessions almost openly collect a “rake-off” from rickshaws waiting for fares in their bailiwicks, or from carts passing through them. Coolies carrying baskets of rice or other grain are prevented from scooping out a handful to augment their scanty fare by a large red or black character stamped on the surface of the grain in each basket. Pigs carried from market to shop or elsewhere cannot be switched for others weighing a few pounds less because the owner has stamped his individual character on the flanks of the protesting animal. In Yünnanfu we found, though a man drove through the streets, her calf at her heels, and milked at our door the cow that furnished foreigners their queer beverage, that our “strictly fresh milk” was distinctly not that, and close examination disclosed that the milkman had running down his sleeve a tube through which he let in bean-curd water that would probably not have augmented the growth



of our children. Every copper that passes through the hands of the normal Chinese servant must pay its way. When your cook goes to market, a small percentage of the marketing money goes into his pocket. If you deal with some wholesale house by the month, your cook drifts in soon after you have paid your month's bill to collect his commission from the merchant, without which he will find you some cause for complaint at this man's goods before the next month is out. If you send your "boy" out to call a repairman, you may be sure that the latter will slip him a small percentage of his earnings before he leaves, in return for calling him instead of one of his many competitors. If you buy something at a shop, the chances are that your rickshaw-man will go back there later, even if it means a long walk at unseasonable hours, to collect "cumshaw" from the perhaps unwilling but helpless merchant, who knows that refusal to disgorge will make it extremely difficult to turn your rickshaw wheels in his direction again.

Though the sums "squeezed" are generally small, ridiculously so to the Western felon, there is probably more incessant and wide-spread thieving in China than in all the rest of the earth, especially as we are assured that one third of the human race lives there. But squeeze does not imply dishonesty to the Chinese mind, though to the inexperienced foreigner it is rascality of the deepest dye, until he comes to realize that it is an accepted means of augmenting meager incomes. There is a certain strict honesty, too, in this incessant small stealing. The cook who takes much more than the customary small percentage, the "boy" who really lets your interests suffer in his eagerness for a large squeeze, the coolie who sells to outsiders too much of your load of coal, would be looked down upon by their fellows almost as much as by any Westerner. In fact, you may not lose a copper through all this rascality. If you went to market yourself, you would certainly pay on the average more than your cook, with his Celestial expertness in bargaining, would pay and squeeze combined. It may even be that, competition being keen and foreign residents much given to sharing impressions on prices, your monthly bill has not been doctored to cover the commission, but that the merchant has paid this out of his own profits.

Chinese life and ways are contagious; their boasted power to absorb even the conqueror is not mere talk. It is no doubt symbolical of the Chinese power of absorption that even the most important American and English firms in China come to indulge in squeeze and

consider it perfectly legitimate. Tender a "Mex" dollar in payment for a ten-cent article in any foreign establishment in Shanghai and you will get back ninety cents in "small money," though just around the corner Chinese money-changers would have given you nearly \$1.20 of that "small money" for the same dollar; in fact, even in the Chinese department-stores you will get full change, generously figured according to the exchange of the day. The foreign banks have, of course, old and wide-spread precedent for taking far more serious squeeze. Thus, at ten in the morning Mr. Smith drops into one of the sumptuous banking-houses in one of the concessions with a check or a draft for a thousand American dollars. He receives, say, \$1890 "Mex" and departs. At 10:10 his fellow-countryman, Mr. Jones, drops in and asks for a draft on the United States for \$1000 gold. The bank virtually hands him the paper for which it just paid Mr. Smith \$1890, though a bit of red tape conceals that bald fact, and charges Mr. Jones \$1950 "Mex" for it. In other words, the bank pockets sixty "Mex" dollars for its kindness in writing a letter to its correspondent in America asking him to transfer \$1000 from the credit of Mr. Smith to that of Mr. Jones. It would be un-bank-like to overlook any chance of boosting this percentage, so most banks figure the gold dollars first into the imaginary taels of Chinese trading; then they figure the taels into "Mex" dollars, not forgetting, of course, to take their squeeze on both operations; and the "Mex" goes back through the same two squeezed processes before it becomes gold in the hands of Mr. Jones again. Even the missionary establishment at Kuling takes a squeeze equal to twice that which banks in America consider sufficient reward for issuing and paying letters of credit, for the mere privilege of giving you in exchange for your check on Hankow or Shanghai some money which they are anxious to have deposited in Hankow or Shanghai anyway.

Possibly the most trying of the countless squeezes in China befalls the traveler when he is preparing to return home. He walks into a steamship office in Hong Kong or Shanghai and asks for a ticket across the Pacific. The price thereof is quoted to him in gold—375 good American dollars, thanks to the success of the Shipping Board division of our trust-busting government in keeping nearly all trans-Pacific steamers up to the high rate made necessary by our own ineptitude as sailors. "Very well," says the prospective passenger, digging down into a pocket, "here is \$375 in good old American greenbacks, or here is my certified check for that amount in my American

bank." "Oh, dear, no," replies the steamship-office clerk, with a real or recently acquired Hong Kong accent, "we cannot use American money here, you know. We merely quote fares in American money. You will have to pay in local currency." The prospective passenger, being inexperienced, let us assume, steps across the street to the nearest foreign banking palace and cashes his \$375 into, let us say, \$695 "Mex," and returns to the steamship agency. "Oh, dear, but this is twenty-five dollars short!" cries the clerk, having counted it up after the leisurely way of the East. "But I just this moment paid \$375 gold for it," protests the simple traveler. "Ah, yes, quite," says the bland clerk; "but the bank of course gave you the buying rate; we have to charge you the selling rate," and the prospective passenger must go back and cash about fifteen gold dollars more to make up the original \$375. If his party happens to consist of half a dozen people, this single squeeze may easily equal the sum total out of which he has been squeezed by the Chinese during all his stay in China.

Like everything else in China, or anywhere, squeeze has its legitimate causes. With competition as keen as it can be in a densely overcrowded country, your merchant dares not take as big a profit as he would like; your workman dares not demand the wages he feels he ought to have, lest one of the score of others eagerly waiting for his job at any price crowd him out; but once the place or the competition is won, there are subtle little means of augmenting wages or profits without running great risk of loss of trade or job. That condition has reigned so long in China that squeeze has come to be regarded as not only not dishonest but legitimate. In imperial days squeeze extended clear to the throne; not merely the chief eunuch and the prime minister but often the Empress Dowager herself could only be moved to action by a present. Nor has it decreased under the "republic," rather the contrary, and the foreigner who hopes to live peacefully and comfortably in China will do well to adapt himself to the situation as soon as possible and not make a good servant leave to bury a dead father who may have been buried many times before and still be in the best of health, merely because he discovers that of the two dollars he paid to have his shoes repaired only \$1.90 really went to the shoemaker. The squeeze is merely an older, more fixed, Oriental form of our tip and has become as much an accepted part of the civilization of China as have gratuities along the tourist trails of Europe.

But we are still engaged in research on the serious question, "Are the Chinese honest?" Let us go on with the evidence. The same

cook who tucks a few of your coppers away in his belt each time he goes to market for you in the early dawn would die at his post rather than let a thief carry away one of your dishes. The "boy" who exacts a dime from the carpenter he called in to repair your wall would never dream of stealing money out of the unlocked drawer where he knows you keep it; he will be as safe a custodian of the jewelry and other valuables you carelessly leave lying about as the vault of a bank; he has been known in our own household to pass an entire month without once stepping outside the compound during my absence, lest he fail in some duty to the unprotected lady of the house. The coolies who carry your baggage on a cross-country trip may know that a considerable portion of their heavy burdens consists of rolls of silver dollars; but though they are out of your sight most of the time on the road, though they are sometimes benighted in some wretched inn that is not your wretched inn, where even their fellow-guests know that they are carrying valuable things belonging to a *Yang-ren*, a man from overseas and therefore rich, it will be a rare day when you find some of that money or other valuables missing. In other words, like Americans, Englishmen, Frenchmen, and so on through the entire international list, the Chinese are honest, and they are not. There are, of course, degrees in national honesty, just as there are among individuals; but much depends on the point of view. The full moon may have a man's face in it, or it may have an old man chopping down a tree.

Of late years there seems to have been a recrudescence of the theory on which aristocracy has been justified since the dim years of history, the theory of the complete superiority of birth, of heredity over environment. So eager have the exponents of this view been, holding a brief, one might suspect, for the privileged classes, that they have not balked at inventing ridiculous stories, grafting impossible scandals upon the family trees of men who have risen from low estate to eminence. They seem wilfully to have overlooked the plain and ever reiterated lesson of history, that families, like nations, rise and fall, that the son of an illustrious father has seldom been as illustrious and that the grandson has usually been still less so, that a vast majority of the world's famous men came up from the class of oblivion, and have almost invariably, through their posterity, in fact if not in outward appearance kept up by special privileges and vested interests, sunk down into it again.

This plain truth is one of the pillars of democracy, and the ob-

servant traveler in China will not infrequently find reason to hope that even the masses of that socially conservative land are capable of reaching upward, sometimes of leaping at a bound from utter obscurity to real eminence. China is in no sense a republic, but it is to a very considerable extent a democracy, and peasants and coolies have in some cases become men of real power in the brief years since the revolution. But the Chinese, whether coolie turned soldier or general made governor, cannot endure prosperity with anything like the cheerful success with which they do adversity. The man who tricks or fights his way under a Spartan régime to power and wealth is likely to surround himself with opium-pipes and concubines and sink to his former level again. From the Chinese point of view it seems to be enough to have won high place for himself and family for all time—since the gods and spirits of the after-world, as well as future generations on earth, must forever recognize the rank of the highest link in the chain—and retrogression by the branch on earth does not seem greatly to matter. Thus the history of Chinese dynasties, rising from the ground and sinking into it again after a few generations or centuries, seems to be a natural Chinese characteristic.

Given his facility in "losing face," it is natural that the Celestial is able to win face easily, to arrogate to himself more credit than a given incident really warrants; being, in the common sense of the word, something of a coward, it is not difficult for him to turn bully. Because of this, "old China hands," not a few missionaries among them, are often bitter in their denunciation of the Washington Conference, "from which was born," to quote an editor among them, "the disastrous policy of sickly sentiment toward the Young China party, who have done their utmost to ruin China." A surprisingly wide swath of old foreign residents insists that the conference was one of the worst things that could have happened to the Chinese under their present condition, for by granting new concessions instead of insisting that the Chinese delegates first go home and clean house, it gave the nation a "swelled head." Especially in the far interior the conference is credited by these critics with convincing China that the "outside barbarians" who make up the rest of the world are afraid of her and her great "armies"; and the raising of more armies, the capture of foreigners to be used as pawns in internal political games, are said to be among its results. It was like, on a national scale, they say, being over-kind to your coolies; and only those who have lived long in China know just what that means.

If there is any real distinction between the words, the Chinese may be said to be ingenious rather than inventive. Up to a certain point he is a marvel of ingenuity, of finding means to accomplish under unpromising circumstances; but he seems to have no desire, even if he has the power, to progress beyond the first effectual consummation. So long as he overcomes sufficiently the difficulties which nature imposes to accomplish the thing at all, he seems to remain forever satisfied. Mere unnecessary work does not trouble him; thanks perhaps to the oversupply of man-power which the country has long enjoyed and suffered under, there has been little incentive to work toward labor-saving devices. He shows his ingenuity rather in doing without adequate materials, far scarcer and more precious than man-power in this crowded land, than in trying to reduce muscular exertion.

While one could attach many ifs, ands, and buts to the statement, the Chinese, down to the very peasants and coolies, are a very intelligent race, for all the general illiteracy and senseless superstitions. I know of no race in which the contrast is so great between hard common sense and utter damn-foolishness. The Chinese is adroit, dexterous, proficient, quick-witted up to a certain youthful level, but like his civilization he no longer develops beyond that point. Even the important things he is credited with inventing—gunpowder, block printing, the compass, bank-notes—he has seldom developed beyond the primitive stage. In porcelain, tapestries, in the arts and fine crafts where he can exercise his genius for detail, make use of his infinite patience, he has advanced far; but not in his methods, his utensils, either of agriculture or of his industries. One gets hints everywhere of this kind of arrested development. Among the coolies, for instance, the boy of twelve is often quicker-witted and quite as wise as his fellows of forty; even among foreign-educated Chinese doctors if the case does not come within the range of the medical books already extant, let the patient die; his temperament does not impel the man in charge of it to try for further individual progress. The Chinese mind and nerves are built for detail; memory, especially visual memory, is undoubtedly the essential faculty of a brain in which are lacking those of analysis and abstraction. But within its very definite limits that brain is a marvelously trained and resistant instrument. These are qualities which political or economic changes cannot eradicate; they are an acquisition of the race, fixed in its nerve-centers by immemorial ancestral habits.

Confucius is credited with petrifying the Chinese, with inspiring laws forbidding change, thereby drying up individual initiative. Be that as it may—and there are signs to-day that the petrification may not be permanent—the traveler in China often has the sense of being back in an ancient civilization that, arrested in its march like a waterfall overtaken by a vigorous winter, has solidified, petrified. The impression is of a group as stable as it is different from those of the West, but a group forever fixed in its habits. Like an ancient civilization dug up alive from its burial-place, it shows us outworn things that are disgusting, and others that are pleasing with the naïveté of more primitive times. It is much as if we were transported back to Nineveh and Baalbeck. The complicated formulas of social intercourse fixed since time immemorial, customs contemporary with long-disappeared civilizations, are still alive in China. The centuries-old forms of temples and houses, the costumes, utensils, attitudes, rites, are quite like those on the surviving monuments of two or three thousand years ago in other parts of Asia. Their interminable politenesses, which halt life, their formalities, the infinite complications of their etiquette, are all from the days when slaves were ruled by tyrants who had the right to order a head off for a whisper; hence they seem so different from our own not-greatly-fear-any-one courtesies. Having had these now petrified details of deportment for many centuries during which the laying of one's chop-sticks just so, the wearing of just such a gown, the exact degree of greeting, all have had their distinct significance, it is not strange that the Chinese consider all outsiders barbarians, even as our hostesses do the man who attacks the fish course with a soup-spoon.

China's supreme originality is in being the direct heir of her own past, in having maintained intact in direct line her moral heritage for more than forty centuries, while our Western civilizations are only the indirect and incomplete, sometimes the illegitimate, inheritances of civilizations that preceded them. But in spite of its conservatism, its countless disasters, there has been some real progress in the former Celestial Empire even in this century, and while in a sense regretting it, one must credit it mainly to the stability, petrification if you like, of the Chinese character and the social cohesion that goes with long immutability. The spiritual civilizations of the Chinese, too, can bring us enrichments, can carry us back to the simplicities and the charities of ancient days, which we have too long forgotten. Whatever Celestial faults, it is significant that superior white men of long residence among them often become too Chinese in point of view to be of much service

to their governments. The first British head of the maritime customs was credited with becoming virtually a Chinese; many of the veterans in the consular services champion the Chinese way of looking at things as against the Western; one now and then runs across an old missionary almost completely Sinofied. It seems that, little by little, this ancient civilization invades, disarms, and takes possession of them. It is not merely that China absorbs all comers, but that there is some attractive quality about the Chinese which effectually offsets all their manifestly unpleasant characteristics, so that practically all foreigners who are capable of sympathy with another race become warm friends of the Chinese after a few years of real residence among them. Who knows but that it is the most pleasing as well as the most valuable of their qualities, so aptly named by the venerable Dr. Smith their "flexible inflexibility," the ability to resist yet never to show the brittleness that breaks, that leaves China, a playmate in its youth with Egypt and Babylon, still sturdy and in the main flourishing?

The constant proximity of China's chief problem, overpopulation, tempts me to expound a few more sage words on that most serious subject before we take to the trail again. Because the Chinese consider it sacrilegious for any family to die out, China is overpopulated. Perhaps there are four hundred million Chinese, as we have been assured at least since my school-days, though I have my suspicions that if there were that many then there are more than that now. It may be true that every third child born into the world is Chinese, so that many a worthy Western couple has been forced to content itself with two, lest the third bear out this dreadful contention. Any one is entitled to a guess as to the population of any Chinese city or district, to say nothing of the country as a whole. But perhaps some of our guesses overshoot the mark because we are using Western sights; we have in a way admitted as much by withdrawing quietly of late years a statement common in school geographies of a generation ago, that Peking is the most populous city in the world. The officials incapable of taking a census are quite as absurd guessers; the police administration of Peking recently figured the population of the capital to be 1,133,479, which might have passed muster had they not immediately added the ridiculous rider that of these 738,620 are males and only 394,859 females! So the guess-book is open again. There are times when and places where Peking does seem the most populous city in the world; there are thousands of really small cities throughout China



that one might judge, in the heart of town at a busy hour, to be enormous. The straightened streets are always crowded and give the traveler the impression of a high density; but when he comes to look about him he finds that buildings are chiefly one story high, that with few exceptions Chinese cities cover no great area, and that the widening of one of the narrow streets to Western width gives it a placid, easy-going, spacious aspect totally different from its normal Chinese condition.

Since guessing is the only authority on the subject, it is hardly worth while to finance an argument in the matter; let it go then at four hundred million. I am sure that I have seen a hundred million of them myself, most of them jogging endlessly along path-like "roads" or elbow-wide "streets" under ox-like burdens; and I am still more certain that there are often far too many of them for the selfish traveler's comfort. In fact, on the whole I think the greatest hardship of living in China is the impossibility of sometimes getting away from the Chinese. We are an ungregarious race indeed compared to the Celestials. But only one statement about the population of China can really be made without any danger of successful contradiction—that it is as large as unconstrained nature will permit; for a colony of insects does not obey more blindly the commandments of the hereditary instinct.

From this tree spread many branches. The low status of women in the China of to-day is almost certainly one of them. To most of the four hundred million the woman is only a means of perpetuating the family. The masses look upon a new-born girl somewhat as we do upon a heifer or a mare colt, as a useful instrument in producing more descendants to worship at some family shrine—never her own—but of no such importance in the larger scheme of things as the unalienable, effectively worshipping male. To be sure, this does not prevent a natural affection for a baby, though it be only a girl, from growing up within the Chinese breast, even as we grow fond of a colt or a calf on account of its amusing ways or its glossy hide. But there is a wide gulf between the Chinese and the Occidental attitude on the subject of the lower sex. Any affection openly shown toward a mother by a typical Celestial beyond childhood is looked upon much as would a similar display toward a negro wet-nurse by an American who had reached the age of discretion. A rich banker of Shanghai was captured by bandits. He managed to create the impression that he was not a man of wealth, sent home for his "No. 5 wife," who did not greatly please him anyway, and successfully offered her along with a bit

of money he pretended to be his all for his release. The typical Chinese even of to-day probably saw nothing reprehensible in this clever stroke of a man of wit.

Where the very poorest people continue to marry their children at the earliest possible age, and these children bring up, or at least bear, the largest possible families, it is natural that the youngsters cannot be fairly treated. Not long ago the English-language newspapers of China reported a voluntary case of altruism among the foreign firms there, the Chinese papers taking no more account of it than of many another of the queer but unimportant idiosyncrasies of the *Yang-ren*, the "ocean men" from beyond the seas:

Announcement is made that Messrs.—[an old and important British corporation] will in future prohibit child labor in their mills, and *no boy under ten or girl under twelve* will be employed.

The first legislative attempt to protect Chinese children from economic exploitation consists of a thus far vain attempt to get a quorum of the one per cent of residents in the international settlement at Shanghai entitled to vote in order to set limits to child employment. It is not a drastic measure; the rate-payers are merely asked, if a third of them can ever be torn away from their clubs and their golf long enough to register an opinion, to prohibit the employment in industrial establishments within the settlement of children under fourteen for longer periods than twelve hours out of the twenty-four, with a compulsory rest of one hour; and it is "recommended" that such children be given twenty-four hours of continuous rest once every fourteen days. That covers the child-labor legislation in China to date—and please note that it is not fathered by the Chinese, nor, properly speaking, is it in China, but in a foreign-ruled territory. Much opposition has developed, on the ground that thousands of children who cannot exist without work would have to leave the settlement and work in French or Chinese territory under worse conditions. There is little, of course, to be gained by a remedy applied on so small a scale; though that does not mean that the British and American ladies' welfare groups are not quite justified in starting agitation which might, centuries hence, somewhat improve the conditions of children in China.

The Chinese take it for granted that the child shall become a rice-winner just as soon as it is capable of earning anything. The coolie's six-year-old son takes his place in front of his father's wheelbarrow, or hardens his shoulders to his proportionate share of the family load,

as naturally as our children begin their schooling—and with less protest. Work seems so natural to the great mass of the Chinese that it would no more occur to a boy of the toiling populace to expect exemption from the family task than it would to the adult. In fact, the laboring-man begets sons quite as much for the assistance they will bring him a few years later as for the perpetuation of his line and the assurance of having the proper rites performed to his memory after he is gone. Like so many of the reforms sponsored by foreigners in China, one wonders if the attempt to curb child-labor is not beginning at the wrong end of the stick. It may be that general and enforced child-labor laws throughout China, if they were possible, would in time affect the prevailing practice of setting no voluntary limit to the increase in population; but until something in the nature of birth-control becomes effective there, such laws are likely in practice to do more harm than good. So long as the boy or girl has no choice but the life of hard, grueling, ill-fed labor that is ahead of the vast majority of them now, it may be better to harden the muscles and the nerves for the endurance necessary, just as it is best for the Chinese baby, destined to sleep all its life on board beds or earth floors under all sorts of uncomfortable conditions, to learn that trick at once by sleeping on the back of a working mother.

There are labor-unions in some parts of China, notably in Canton and vicinity, but thus far they have little in common with those powerful organizations of that name in the English-speaking world. During 1923 there was labor agitation of the modern type in the Yang Tze Valley, strikes or threatened strikes in foreign factories which were likely to spread to a railroad on which the militarists were greatly dependent. Wu Pei-fu, then chief master of China and especially powerful in the valley of the great river, ordered his general in command there to have several of the principal agitators shot; and upon prompt compliance with the command Wu announced that, "In connection with the recent labor troubles, the execution of the ring-leaders has been carried out, and there will be no serious labor disturbances in the central Yang Tze Valley for a long time to come." Perhaps not; but the "labor problem" even in China probably cannot always be handled so simply as the narrow-minded militarists fancy. On the other hand the Gompers treatment is not feasible under such conditions as exist in China to-day. Men cannot combine and demand high wages on penalty of doing no work in a community where there are six other men eager, though the reward is nothing more than a few

bowls of rice, to take the place of any workman who quits. Even if it were possible, your labor leader would in effect be saying, "We will form closed corporations of a thousand workers in this industry, get them plenty of work at generous wages, and the ten thousand other men left with nothing to do we will allow to starve, families and all."

Almost any problem, certainly any of economic purport, fetches up sooner or later inevitably head-on into the same stone wall in China,—the oversupply of human beings. Modern transportation will help somewhat of course, by distributing the population more evenly and by bringing great producing areas within practicable reach of markets. Our able commercial attaché at Peking insists that railroads are more vitally needed in China as it is to-day than are schools. But comparatively little fertile land lies uncultivated except what is wasted in graves; such regions as Kwangsi and Kweichow, sparsely inhabited as compared with man-swarming Shantung and Kiangsu, are rocky, mountainous, or insufficiently watered to support any such population. Though he hardly realizes it in the mass, the Chinese who finds himself one too many at home is virtually shut within an iron ring that makes emigration impossible as a way out of the problem, even if, again in the mass, he were given to leaving his native village permanently. Our own exclusion act, which gave us the more troublesome Japanese in place of the docile Celestial along our western coast, and caused many another sparsely settled land to follow suit, has done its share, by increasing the economic pressure, in creating the soldiery and banditry that is overrunning China to-day.

The great cry among foreigners of the business type, when they are not urging the exploitation of China's non-human resources which at present can only be exploited by foreigners, is that China must develop industries to take care of her surplus population, must be "industrialized" in the modern Western sense, made over into a land of factories in which the unlimited ocean of labor can be utilized. This might be an advantage to the labor supply itself; there might conceivably be work for every one and at higher wages, though past performances elsewhere indicate that in all likelihood the cost of necessities would draw farther ahead in the race in proportion as it waxed more furious, so that the only net result to the working masses would be a swifter pace, in the course of which they might lose what is perhaps their chief asset, an outward cheerfulness that shows indications of coming from real inner happiness under what to ordinary men would be the most depressing circumstances. That the gain to the "indus-

trialists" who could use this vast supply of cheap and industrious labor would be enormous there is no question; the hue and cry for "industrializing" China would be enough to prove that, even if it were not obvious on the face of it. But Heaven knows that no one who is genuinely interested in the Chinese masses wishes to see that old but only agriculturally well-exploited land of ancient home handicrafts reduced to the modern factory system, her individual arts and crafts turned into standardized products by commercialized American methods. There the real "home arts" still flourish, and it might be better that a few million individuals perish, even that a few "industrialists" fall short of the multimillionaire class, until China learns not to produce children up to the very edge of her rice supply, than to have these arts and the type of human being that goes with them disappear entirely from the face of the earth. I can contemplate only with the horror of nightmare the dream of seeing the porcelains of Kiangsi turned out by the modern factory process, so many vases, cups, and bowls a minute speeding down the chutes to the wrappers! Horrible as living and working conditions are in Kingtehchen, I would far rather see them go on unchanged than change to that. Japan is a horrible example, on a diminutive scale, of what the indiscriminate adoption of such alien ways would probably do to China. Modern factory methods have killed Japan's art, but her factories are filled with sweated workers producing commercialized imitations of what was once beautiful. She seeks to flood the markets of the world with this impersonal junk, so that the revenue from her exports may buy armaments; but her delicate handicrafts are perhaps gone forever, and her workers are better off only in the arithmetical proportions of the wages that pass through their fingers.

The Chinese need our methods of sanitation, some of our modern forms of transportation; they need to look the West over carefully and seeingly for those parts of our industrial, as well as our intellectual, civilization that will fit into their scheme of things. But it would be contrary to the spirit of the Chinese people, unless I have grossly misread them, and therefore a misfortune not only to them but to the world at large, for them to adopt our Western antithesis for the home method that has long proved best for the worker and the buyer in China. Given the Chinese temperament, small-scale local production is likely not only to give a better product than factory production but to bring more happiness to the workers, because it is in keeping with Chinese traditions, endowments, and historic ways. Something

of Henry Ford's and Mahatma Gandhi's essentially similar dreams of keeping the workers on the farms, with manufacturing as a side-line, may be the answer to the problem, rather than the long travail of passing through the bitter factory phase of the industrialized West. In a general way China's problem resembles that of Mexico, to take an example nearer home. It is the dilemma of the so-called "backward" nations, each of which, while having a culture of its own, is slow to adopt the modern industrial civilization which much of the world is sure is essential to its future happiness and continued existence. But like the family that persists in getting along without telephone, electricity, phonograph, and radio, China may continue serenely on its way in the face of neighbors' prophecies and enjoy a felicity that is denied those who "progress" with the times.



The French are not unjustly proud of their narrow gauge railway through and over the mountains to Yünnanfu, three days from the northern port of Indo-China



Looking across Yünnanfu, capital of the southwesternmost province of China, 6000 feet above sea-level





## CHAPTER XVI

### UP TO YÜNNANFU

**O**F Caucasians who come to China perhaps one in five thousand goes up into the southwesternmost province of the country, and of those something like six out of seven are French. Yet as Chinese railways go, the meter-gauge French line from Haïphong and Parisian Hanoï up to the capital of Yünnan is not uncomfortable, and it is certainly worth traveling. Once a week in the summer-time—though that is not a very distinct term in Indo-China—there is a night train from Hanoï to the frontier, and by changing cars and continuing at once next morning the traveler can reduce the usual three-day trip to a night and two days. It was our good luck to find the first “sleeper” of the season leaving on the very night we were ready to go, but we were a trifle set back at sight of it. Europeans make much of our lewdness in having mere curtains before the berths of our Pullmans, but the single car at the end of the train that left Hanoï early that evening contained nothing but a row of flat bunks, what the French call *couchettes*, with nothing whatever between them and the outer world except mosquito-nets. We managed for all that and a certain tendency of narrow-gauge sleeping-cars to roll, if not to pitch, to survive the night.

There were some formalities next morning, but nothing at all compared with what one must expect in coming back from Chinese into French territory. In fact I was reminded that during my more than two years of travel in all parts of China I was never once asked for my passport. At one city gate a soldier did meekly say, “Hoochow?” which means something akin to passport, but when I replied with a wave of the hand, “Oh, it’s ’way down in my trunk on that mule,” he was quite satisfied with a visiting-card. This is another of the advantages foreigners enjoy in China, in contrast to its neighboring countries, Japan, Russia, and these French colonies, where the stranger might better be without bread and the wherewithal to purchase it than without his official papers. However, lest some prospective traveler in China be misled, it is always well to have one’s passport there

for all that, for to be taken for a Russian or a German in case of possible, even if improbable, conflict with the Chinese authorities is to lose extraterritorial rights, and the difference between a Chinese court and prison and a prompt turning over to one's own consul is wide indeed.

The 290 miles—not as the wild goose flies!—from Loakay, frontier station of Indo-China, to Yünnanfu is one of the most magnificent pieces of railroading in the world. The constant traveler comes to have small enthusiasm for the mere mechanics of travel, but the Chemin de Fer du Tonkin et du Yünnan presents as many marvels of engineering as of scenery. The French of Indo-China are very proud of it, *et avec raison!* From Hanoï to the border it follows the Red River almost on the level, but once in China it seems to lose the circumspectness of foreign rule, and for two days it winds among and through and ever up the mountains, climbing almost without cessation, digging its claws into abrupt mountain flanks, dashing across ravines, plunging into tunnels, jumping from hole to hole in vertical rock cliffs, at the foot of which roar stony mountain streams straddled by spider-legged metal bridges or viaducts that spring in long graceful arches across what would have seemed unbridgeable chasms. The French tell those who are interested in statistics that between the Chinese border and Yünnanfu there are 152 tunnels and eight artificial galleries, 3422 viaducts, bridges, and aqueducts, the longest with seventeen jumps of eight meters each; they can even tell you the total kilometrage underground and in the air, but suffice it to say that in one place there are nineteen tunnels within ten kilometers, with a total length of 2253 meters. The mere traveler will be aware of the tunnels mainly by the frequent stuffiness of his coach, sometimes wondering, since the grade is often steep and slow, whether he is ever going to get his lungs clear again, perhaps only to plunge into another shaft before the fine mountain air has begun to disperse the suffocating coal-gas. The viaducts and bridges will be to him little more than respites from this, and magnificent vistas made more exhilarating by the sense of how little stands between him and a sudden death at the bottom of the mighty gorge below. The building of this line must have been heartbreaking, for no sooner had they tunneled solid rock than they must spring across some great chasm by a stork-legged bridge to begin the task anew on the other side, here crawl along under an overhanging cut-out of rock, there build the line up on stone supports, forever tunnel and bridge, until it is not hard to believe the legend, commonplace as it is, that the line cost a coolie life for every rail.

From both the engineer's and the tourist's point of view perhaps the finest stretch is the mighty horseshoe curve of the false Nam-ti, one of the regions most striking for the Alpine grandeur of its abrupt and savage landscape. The vegetation has little by little abandoned its tropical character, to take on that of the temperate regions; there are terraces everywhere, steeper than stairways, long, but as narrow as they are high, the mountains about them mirrored in their new-rice-dotted waters; the scene appears and reappears beyond tunnels and from various places of vantage, like a moving picture of the same splendid thing from many angles. A single great hair-pin turn lasts for hours, through a score of tunnels, at the end of which we are just on the other side of the gorge, an easy rifle-shot from where we started. In places the train seems to be a playful puppy chasing its own tail; in others, as it dashes across flying bridges and into jagged holes piercing the mighty rock ranges, up through which the little locomotive shrilly toots its way in a distressing European falsetto from sea-level to, in one place, an altitude of 8000 feet, it seems some hunted thing frantic in its efforts to get through and over the mountains and away. Given this constant twisting, winding, and rising on a narrow meter-gauge, it is not strange that the Yünnan Railway is almost as famous for seasickness as the bounding main.

The French trains of Indo-China and Yünnan have four classes, of which the first three occupy as many parts of a single car or two. In the center of this aristocratic combination coach a single compartment, with two leather-upholstered European seats facing each other across as much of the car as is not taken up by the side corridor, passes for first class, and is occupied almost exclusively by the upper rank of railway employees bearing passes or by government officials with *réquisitions*, which means that the Government pays their fares, no doubt on a reduced scale. Once in a while a haughty Englishman or the American scion of a ten-cent store is found there paying his own fare, so reasonable, especially for return trips of considerable duration, that it is strange there are so few bona-fide first-class passengers. But the two races that use the line most are both of an economical turn of mind, and just over the half-partition are two compartments slightly less regally upholstered which cost only two thirds as much, while on the other side, through that swinging door in a real partition, half the car is taken up by third-class passengers, whose pleasure at cutting even this lower price in two offsets the straight-backed, hard wooden benches and an occasional not particularly desirable fellow-traveler. All foreigners, and a few Chinese of wealth, travel in this

three-class car; all the rest, in the fourth-class coaches that make up the bulk of the train. Indeed, Europeans, among whom the world, or at least the Orient, persists in including Americans, are not permitted to ride fourth class, though now and then a destitute Russian may "get away with it" by having a Chinese buy his ticket, the French ticket-collector getting out of the difficulty by ordering him back into third class. For all its lack of springs, fourth class is not so bad as it sounds, being made up of large open semi-box-cars with four benches the length of them, packed with every manner of Chinese and any possible baggage that the doors will admit, but airy and roomy, with few burdensome rules of conduct. I have seen church organs and wheelbarrows riding fourth class, and considering the cost of building and maintaining the line the bulk of the passengers pay almost no fare at all.

In the afternoon of the first day of incessant climbing we came out above the vast plain of Mongtze, brown and treeless, except about the clusters of towns that clung to it like curled-up caterpillars on a carpet, yet a beautiful velvety brown, flat as a vast lake, walled by partly invisible mountains. We coasted down for an hour to the junction where a ludicrous little Chinese branch railroad, with a kind of iron bulldog dragging behind it a few large tin cans on wheels, carries those who have no choice but to go to Mongtze, which thanks to French plans that somewhat miscarried and to its proximity to the tin mines of Yünnan is a treaty-port, for all its shipless situation. Lower still, down in wet rice-fields again, all travelers stop for the night at Amichow, a walled town with all the familiar details of Chinese life. In fact, in our case it was for two nights, and the day between, obviously, for though the hotel run by a Greek and his Japanese lady-love, both speaking the tongue of the line, was inferior to a Ritz, it was preferable to dragging two small children and their grandmother out early next morning for another seasicky day of travel.

All the morning of the last day we climbed a river valley until it petered out to nothing among high hills, on top of which spread great plains with apricot orchards. Big baskets of the fruit were already appearing at the stations, though it was barely the middle of May. Here, high above the rice-fields that got their water scantily now from thin streams that in the rainy season are the terror of the railroad men, there were constant reminders of the Andes,—the same dry-brown, treeless vistas, pack-animals, adobe houses with tile roofs

(though earth-colored here rather than red), stony wandering paths, makeshift roads up the bare faces of the mountains, as if climbing were no more trouble than walking on the level, the same half-ruined, hopeless aspect in the dirty villages, the same cloud-shadows playing across great wrinkled landscapes, with a scattering of green trees, often the eucalyptus, even as in South American highlands. In fact the likenesses between China and the Andean region are astonishing; one might squander whole pages making mere lists of them. A Chinese going to Peru or Bolivia, especially to their uplands, should feel much at home, and that not merely in physical surroundings. There are not a few suggestions of human similarity, for not only have the Chinese much in common in personal temperament and customs with the part-Spanish residents of the Andes, but here there were tribes-people who bore resemblances to the Andean Indians. Yünnan is the province of many tribes, and even at the stations there were strange types that were quite evidently not Chinese, women in turbans and knee-length skirts with accordeon pleats, their bare, unbound feet alone showing that they are of an alien race, though it has perhaps lived in what is to-day China since the stone age. These hardy mountain women carried a kind of Adirondack basket on their backs, with a tump-line across their foreheads, up the almost perpendicular paths that twisted and toiled their way to small isolated houses or little villages among the higher hills, dry and bare largely because of the tribal habit of burning them off every few years to form new plantations.

There were forests on the tip-tops of the mountains, where even the destructive Chinese cannot reach them, and here and there down at our own level a thin cluster of long-needled pines about graves with monuments of gray-black upright stones. *Arbor-vitæ* was plentiful; herds of black goats roamed in search of food and water among the bare reddish hills, some of which were blood-red where the rains of a bygone season had washed newly opened wounds. Men with big clumsy hoes were breaking up the big bone-dry clods in the fields, waiting impatiently like all the region for the rain which they said must come soon if they were to be saved from famine and more banditry. But only some snow-white clouds with no more moisture in them than the choking land itself floated now and then across the brilliant heavens.

The walled town of Yi-leang, dominated by a grass-topped pagoda behind what seems to be a cluster of many temples culminating in this, is a roomy place, its wall running so nearly sheer up the hill

that it looks like a town laid out on the hillside to dry. The last bit of the line beyond is among the best, and at length the engine climbed with asthmatic gasps a narrow gorge entirely of rock and brought us out upon another great plateau, treeless but for more apricot orchards, but with terraces of all shapes as far as the eye could see, a red-brown, mottled, sun-flecked Andean landscape, bare, dusty, and wind-blown, but with a great lake of the bluest color, surrounded by vast wrinkled reddish ranges. Lower down we had seen water-buffaloes yoked in pairs for the first time in China, or elsewhere; here they were languidly hauling what looked like rye, in two-wheeled carts along roads worthy of the Andean plateaus this so much resembled. Then came fields of poppies, of pretty colors; Yünnan not only grows much opium but evidently made no secret of it. Beyond, a great plain well above the lake, with long double lines of tall evergreens that looked like slender cryptomerias, here and there the eucalyptus, and finally the hint of a city, still veiled in a curtain of thin trees, with two pagodas unlike most of those in China, one picturesque with a broken top that was grass- and bush-grown, and the towers of a great wireless station, standing above it against distant reddish mountains in the background. It was Yünnanfu, capital of the province South of the Clouds—more exactly, “colored clouds seen in the south”; that is, good luck—where we brought up at a matter-of-fact station that might have been anywhere, which seemed a sad end to so magnificent a railway journey.

I settled down in Yünnanfu for six weeks and my family for four months. Though it is not a place one would pick from the map, it proved on the whole almost our favorite dwelling-place in China. Lying in a big level plain—though small compared with that of Mongtze—with mountains on the horizon in every direction, it was scenically agreeable; being more than six thousand feet above sea-level offset the fact that it sits on the twenty-fifth parallel far south of where one would normally choose to spend the summer. Our youngsters thrive there, and the adults did not lose weight. Besides, though it is farthest from Peking of all the provincial capitals, utterly at the other corner of the ancient empire, we found the people speaking more nearly the Peking mandarin in which three out of five of us could make ourselves understood than anywhere else we had lived for any length of time, which was a great relief after the dialects that had left us tongue-tied in Canton and along much of the coast.

It may be a sign of a single-track mind that it became a confirmed habit with me to walk around the wall of every Chinese city I visited, as the first move toward getting oriented; or it may merely be evidence that the top of the wall offers the only even tolerable promenade in most of them. It was about three hours lazy stroll around that of Yünnanfu, with two or three descents necessitated by the improvements of a modern-minded governor. Gates almost as imposing as those of Peking rose above it, particularly the great East Gate through which we entered the city during our six weeks in the fly-bitten eastern suburb; soldiers and vagabonds made their nests in most of the superstructures, here and there planting little gardens, and the dogs and a similarly mannered populace had free play on the top of the great barrier, in places sadly dilapidated, its value as a promenade greatly reduced by a mud fence on the inner edge that often cut off the view of the city within. At the northern end it climbed over a jagged mass of rocks, with mulberry groves between them, their black berries ripening in June; and stone steps cut in the living rock went down into an adjoining temple with a gilded corpse sheer below, about which soldiers were usually drilling. Inside, the long hill topped the whole length by the red streak of what was once the Normal School, now the governor's yamen, dominated the scene, relieving the flatness of Chinese cities that is almost as general as the blackish gray of their mud-tiled roofs. Men pushed boats about through the flowering surface of a lotus pond almost worthy the name of lake, a road lined with trees across it. Flocks of pigeons led by a few of their number fitted with whistles, after a wide-spread Chinese custom, circled overhead; cloud-shadows played over the massed roofs as across the mottled mountains beyond. Some of the roofs were quite hidden under growing grass, some had slatted windows under the eaves, some a line of yellow tiles or a dragon saucily curving his tail on the peak. Here and there one could look down into a court, perhaps with red-paper charms on its door-posts and an old woman or a girl continually poking chop-sticks under the wicker hat of the boiling rice-pot, smoke now and then drifting up blue-gray in the brilliant atmosphere. The gay South Gate rose proudly in its new festive dress under the bluest of skies, seeming to scorn its poor relative, the old bell tower, farther into the city, a dingy, unpainted old tower, yet with a bell inside that is reputed to be heard for twenty *li* round about, and to ring itself whenever any calamity is about to befall the city, the last time during the Moham-medan rebellion of a generation ago. Trees rise here and there, some

the dark warm green of pine, more of them the slender eucalyptus with their long rustling leaves that join with the clear upland air and the cloud-shadows playing over city, plain, and mountains to carry the mind back to the Andes.

Outside the city, beyond the crenelated parapets of massive mud bricks, the dead of Yünnanfu, for centuries back, it seemed, lay thickly under round grassy mounds stretching from the very edge of the wall beneath to where the hills begin to roll upward into mountains. Along the moat under the eastern and southern wall boats with produce from the country, or cormorant fishermen from the big lake over by Hsi-shan, sometimes pushed their way. The eastern suburb was a goodly town; the southern, with the railway station, the two pagodas, a pair of the most artistic wooden street-arches in China, the half-breed hotel and the new one that is fortunately soon to supersede it, most of the foreign shops, and other establishments of the outside barbarians, was almost as large as the walled city itself.

But before my family left, the soldiers were forbidding the wall even to foreigners, and the streets themselves were more picturesque than pleasant walking. True, Three P'ai-fang Street, still so called though only two of its memorial arches are left, had been newly paved in great flagstones, the nicely crowned surface everywhere chisel-lined to prevent slipping, though on rainy days foreign shoes skidded like treadless auto-tires for all that. The governor had wrought this improvement, as he had built the two or three short pieces of modern highways outside the walls, that he might astound his people with the sight of an automobile, but rare is the man who has ever seen the Dodge he is admitted to have imported, in the face of strong pressure to open the province with a car of French make. The other streets remain for the most part the mixture of broken stones and mud-holes that even the main street was for generations. Along them the pedestrian fights his way against a constant current of horses, mules, and donkeys, not to mention coolies, laden with all the products of the province, most conspicuous among them the halves or quarters of half-globes of salt as it is boiled down about the wells to the west, red characters stamped on them to prevent the carriers from now and then scraping off a handful. Not infrequently the stroller is backed into the frontless shops by a caravan of a thousand animals; shackled prisoners working in the interests of civic improvements, of which Yünnanfu needs its share, like most Chinese cities, rattle past in their heavy anklet chains dragging a cumbersome vehicle, of sanitary pur-





T'ang Ch'i-yao, governor of Yünnan Province since the revolution—with one forced vacation—attended the opening of a new building in the mission hospital in full dignity and a stiff straw hat that recalled his Japanese training



Prisoners in chain anklets dragged cumbersome vehicles of sanitary purposes and did other work in the interests of civic improvements in Yunnanfu



Women and children as well as men patronized the outdoor restaurant in a corner of the city wall at Yünnaufu



Almost before the ruins of the fire at the south gate of Yünnaufu ceased smoking makeshift shops sprang up and imperturbable merchants did business as usual

poses, strange as that may seem, through streets already crowded to overflowing. One does not hurry through Yünnanfu, whatever his plans, but is forced to give ample time to the endless displays of jade and elaborate silver jewelry, whole streets of furs, wolf, leopard, fox of many colors among them, the embroidery shops where men and boys sit forever passing a needle from one hand to the other above and below richly colored cloths held horizontal in wooden frames, so that the right never knows what the left hand is doing.

Among its estimated 180,000 people Yünnanfu includes many races. The province it rules is a kind of last ditch of the many people the Chinese have defeated in acquiring their present large place in the sun, and remnants of most of them may still be seen even in the capital. Once Yünnanfu was the capital of a kingdom of what we miscall the Lolos; Kublai Khan overthrew another kingdom in Yünnan, known as the Nan-chao, with its capital in Talifu, far to the west on the edges of Burma, in the center of the richest part of the province—destroyed by earthquake and fire only the other day; and with the extinction of that kingdom Yünnan became a province of the Chinese Empire, of which up to that time it had only been an occasional possession. Though Yünnanfu was the seat of the viceroy of the present provinces of Yünnan and Kweichow under the Manchus, the province was until recently considered virtually a colony, and appointment there was a kind of banishment. In 1400 an emperor deposed by his uncle fled to Yünnan, and many Chinese followed, forming the *pen-ti-ren* or *min-chiah*, the “original people,” of to-day; but there are still more original people there than that, some of pure tribal blood, more of them interbred with the earlier Chinese, so that one sees sights unknown in most provincial capitals. Carriers of heavy loads borne on the back instead of at the ends of shoulder-poles come in from the west; now and then groups of quite un-Chinese-looking people in turbans and bare feet drift in from the general direction of Tibet; the country women, in bright red trousers, wear, as do some of their men, broad hats set high above their heads on brilliant red hat-bands two inches wide, and sometimes sport picturesquely embroidered jackets. Then, particularly down about the railway station, there are many Annamese, with black-enameled teeth and lips bloody with betel-juice, the women in henna-colored robes noted for their free, uncrippled, lightly trousered gait, the men in a queer black band-turban, and sometimes fluent in what they mean to be the language of their French rulers.

Like the other two great western provinces, Yünnan has several

million Mohammedans, and the capital contains its fair share of them, though except in individual instances they are outwardly indistinguishable from the *Han-ren*, the sons of Han. Some of them can trace their descent on Chinese soil for forty generations, yet rarely indeed do they mingle their blood with that of the pig-eating unbelievers. They, too, held Talifu once in the course of the latest—there are whispers that it may not be the last—great Mussulman rebellion that has left Yünnanfu itself with much less population than it once boasted. Outwardly the *Han-ren* and the *Hwei-hwei* are civil to each other; they even enter into partnerships; but underneath, say those who know western China well, there smolders a constant hatred, and in their religious and social life they are sharply divided.

Along with the mandarin speech we had come to bound feet again, some of the tiniest in China, mere points on the ends of the ankles. For all the impression to the contrary that has spread throughout the Western world in recent years, the traveler in every province comes home convinced that at least 80 per cent of the female population of China over the binding age of six or seven still have bound feet. In fact, I can name several provinces in which I traveled extensively where I never saw an unbound female foot beyond that age. The Manchus succeeded in forcing the cue upon the Chinese so well that millions will not give it up to-day, but though they tried several times, they could not stop foot-binding. Ideas of personal beauty are tenacious things. Besides, natural feet are associated with prostitution; the supreme prudery of the Chinese woman is to hide her feet, which have become for the man the symbol of her sex. In the really Chinese portions of the country only singsong girls and Buddhist nuns had unbound feet, and those without them could not get husbands. The old women seem to be the most insistent on keeping up the custom; the girls themselves often insist, lest they suffer the dreadful fate of remaining unmarried. In exactly those parts of the country with which the vast majority of foreigners in China are familiar—the principal cities and the southern seaboard—uncrippled feet and sturdy calves are the rule; hence, no doubt, the false impression abroad. But certainly in three fourths of China the women of all classes still hobble slowly and painfully along on atrophied pipe-stems that look more like the pointed ends of a two-pronged stake than like the means of locomotion which nature bestows upon our often asinine race. If the equality of women, which some unofficial Chinese propagandists abroad would

have the world believe has come, reached even equality of feet between the sexes, China would have made an important start on the road we all hope she will some day travel.

No less distressing in Yünnanfu is the goiter that is widely prevalent, for some reason less among the men than the women, among whom one often saw horribly repulsive cases, the neck sometimes decidedly larger than the head. Perhaps it is because we shut up our physical and mental abnormalities, while China lets them run loose, that they seem so much more numerous per capita there. The Yünnan capital was unique for public wash-stands along the streets, with rows of enamel wash-basins and badly worn tooth-brushes in tin cups appealing for customers. A copper seemed to furnish hot water and the use of these implements, though this evidently did not include soap, of which most Chinese seem to fight shy, perhaps as an unnatural way of removing dirt. But though I saw this custom nowhere else, the town seemed no cleaner for it.

Those among the Chinese themselves who ought to know say that nine out of ten men and six out of ten women of Yünnanfu, often indeed children in the middle schools, smoke opium. One general smoked two taels' worth a day, though it sells for a song there and the task required steady smoking during all his waking hours, one coolie having no other calling than to tend his pipe, which had its place even in the chair he rode. Consequently all his official business was done by his secretary and a servant who wielded the general's seal. The government offices were always empty in the morning, while officials were sleeping off their opium jags, but were occupied until late at night. The worst of it was that coolies and poor people in general—though these perhaps are more entitled to the oblivion it brings—could buy a cent's worth of opium at a time, so that there was little left from their meager earnings for food. The same transparent trickery prevailed there as in so much of the China of to-day, and while the government posted public notices and issued dreadful decrees against the stuff for the hoodwinking of foreign consuls, it really maintained the traffic for the benefit of its revenues.

Legally there has been no slavery in China since she took on the name of republic, any more than there has been opium-smoking, torture, and the other old Chinese practices; but Yünnanfu is by no means the only place it still exists. Those above the poorest classes almost all prefer slaves to servants—for which perhaps one cannot blame them. "Then there is no bother about wages; the first price pays

forever, and they cannot say what they will and what they will not do," as the high-class young man from whom my wife took her mandarin lessons concisely put it. He himself had three, though he professed Christianity. Good-looking slaves were quoted at forty or fifty dollars, others at twenty-five to thirty—the Yünnanese dollar then fluctuating around one third our own. Good horses were more expensive; mules, several times so. The purchased are not slaves in exactly the way Africans used to be in our Southern States, and on the whole they were no worse treated than the rank and file of freemen, from whom there was no means of distinguishing them at sight; but still they were slaves as far as full freedom goes. Many of them are acquired originally by a parent selling a child, particularly a daughter, into bondage, perhaps to assure it food, something akin to the old English indenture system of "binding out" a boy or a girl, though more severe and usually for life. Girls can acquire freedom from this kind of bondage by marriage, but the man who wishes to marry a slave girl must reimburse her master. The master has the right to flog his bondsman if he does so in public in a temple, though the privilege is now rarely exercised. Newly purchased slaves are provided immediately with clothing, of necessity, since that in which they stand remains the property of the former owner—much like bringing your own halter to lead home a new horse. One sometimes regretted a puritanical conscience that made indulgence in slaves impossible, for as servants the Yünnanese have a long way to go to approach the hard-working, earnest ones of Peking. The French preferred to bring up Annamese, who often knew something of their language and could be slapped about with impunity, and the missionaries who made up the majority of other foreigners were too soft-hearted to build up an efficient servant body. However, though she was nothing to boast of in other ways, our Yünnanese children's *ama* did excellent sewing, and her wages were ten American cents a day without food. A slave must be fed, and no doubt would be as troublesome to dispose of when one must move on as other untransportable chattels.

What with their railway, their "special interests" in Yünnan, both commercially and religiously, and the availability of Yünnanfu as a refuge from the sweltering lowlands of Tonkin and Indo-China in general, it is natural that the French should make up a majority of the varied foreign residents of Caucasian race, especially in summer. Then,

to say nothing of his Majesty's handsome consul, there were British missionaries sufficient to offset the long-bearded *pères* who stood so high in the real-estate world, the usual scattering of nationalities in the postal, customs, and salt services, and of course the sellers of cigarettes and oil as well as of the truer light of the Gospel. In fact there were even a number of Greeks with shops out along the wide east-and-west street in the southern suburb, dealing as exclusively in French goods as they were politically and socially of that category. Being so small a foreign community so far inland, there was more interracial mingling than is general in China, and even the business men and the missionaries were on speaking terms. There is a club—or rather a *cercle*—down in the southern suburb, where the usual amenities of club life take place in a mild way, and naturally one group cannot let another outdo it in national festivities. Every one with anything to wear—except of course the missionaries—and the price of the sedan-chair required not only by high social etiquette but out of wholesome respect for the streets of Yünnanfu on a dark rainy night, went to the fancy-dress ball at the *cercle* on the king's birthday, and obviously the following Fourth of July could not be passed over in silence, particularly with the fourteenth of the same month treading so closely on its heels. Those who know the parsimonious ways of our spendthrift Congress will realize the personal aspect the affair assumed to our consul when I mention that not only are his rivals provided funds for such purposes but that our arrival had doubled the American colony of Yünnanfu, though not its spending power. Worst of all only one of us sold oil or anything else of serious financial import; but one's national face must be saved at all events, even when it includes the sight of our lone missionary pair watching their patriotic donations disappear down Gallic and British throats in the form of champagne. I am afraid Yünnanfu had rather a picayune notion of us as a nation compared to our well-provided rivals, just as our prestige abroad is not helped by having to rent and make habitable a new consulate every year or two and having Chinese landlords able to order our consuls to pack up and move, whether directly or by raising the rent or refusing repairs. However, those were gala days in Yünnanfu, so much so that even ice was sent up from tropical Indo-China, where ice-making machines are a daily French necessity, though it was fortunate for the purchaser if fifty kilograms remained of the hundred that started the three-day journey.

There was a French aviator teaching the Chinese, and a Korean girl

learning to fly under his instructions, which could not but have been of interest to the Japanese consul and his little group; in short, a foreign community more cosmopolitan than numerous. This mixture not only of races but of points of view on many matters made strange contrasts. You had the missionary, to whom a dance was anathema, a pack of cards the devil's own device, and a cigarette the headlight of Satan himself, rubbing elbows with Greeks and Frenchmen who paraded their mistresses about as if the marriage ceremony were of no more importance than in Paris, and motley gatherings in which ladies made conversation with such bits as, "*Mais, Monsieur le Consul, if Madame B. is so ugly, why do you not give her a child and ameliorate the race?*" Which had to be repeated four times before the wife of our own consul made head or tail of it, and that not simply because her French was of recent acquisition. Now and then one met offshoots of interracial arrangements; an old man in a white beard wandered rather disconsolately about town, a man without a country, eager to speak his excellent English to any one willing to listen. For, having been born out of wedlock, he could not be recognized by the French as the son of his father, and the Chinese do not grant any one nationality through a mere mother. The mixed-breed paramour of a shifty-eyed Greek could appear at the *cercle* with perfect propriety, irrespective of her domestic condition, but Chinese could only be admitted as servants. A French lady and her dinner-coated Chinese husband were now and then seen together at teas and minor gatherings, but she was invited without him to the club celebration in honor of the fallen Bastille. Such things are common to all the large ports of the East, but in so small and compact and isolated a community they stood out conspicuously. We seemed to feel, too, rather a general tendency to backbite among foreign residents outwardly the best of friends; the matter of precedents approached the silliness of the British court, and the snobbery reached the point where children of almost exactly the same social stratum must be penned in their compounds lest they play together; all of which does not mean that this little gathering was any worse, or better, than the run of Caucasian humanity elsewhere, but is merely a demonstration of some of the drawbacks of small groups living long among those they treat as their inferiors.

There was a certain mingling of Chinese and foreign inhabitants socially, though almost confined to the missionary group, to which by virtue of dwelling-places we were more or less attached. Chinese women, sometimes men, came to tea on Tuesdays at the home my



family shared after my departure with the lone American couple in mission work. They being trained in the Canton dialect, it fell to my wife to do all the talking both in French and mandarin, until she sometimes admitted that what with thinking in three languages and performing the intricate Chinese social etiquette ambidextrously, so to speak, Tuesday was no sinecure. There was a suspicion that the Chinese women came mainly to see the inside of a foreign house; to feel through the clothes in the bureau drawers seemed to be more interesting to them than tea-drinking, and the baby's crib and rubber bath-tub were the museum's chief exhibits. Then, too, the people of certain social strata were eager to know English—the foreigner's language, as they considered it, even in the face of French numerical preponderance. Some years ago a Y.M.C.A. was started in Yünnanfu, more or less by accident, and as the people showed little interest in other lines the institution had become mainly an English school, a great competitor, especially at fifty cents a month tuition, of a private school in a mass of old buildings in a corner of the city wall run by a French Cantonese, who taught English rather than either of his parental tongues. Girls who wished to learn English had to hire a tutor; but at the "Y" the boys had some foreign and many Chinese teachers, not all of them equally qualified. The first time I walked into that renovated cluster of Chinese buildings about some courts I chanced upon a young Chinese teaching a class that was repeating incessantly after him, including, alas, even his pronunciation, a text which I copied verbatim on the spot, being always interested in new departures and possible improvements in my native tongue:

Chalk do write on black board with.

But at least he had demonstrated the statement in a very good hand, for in penmanship the people who for centuries have made writing an artist's job do well indeed. As in South America, one could not have corrected a Chinese teacher or the mistakes he was drumming into his helpless wards; he would be sure to lose face and quit. So I loaned them my *ch'ien-nei*, my "unworthy inside one," as Chinese etiquette required me to call her, though a third person must use a corresponding honorific, in the hope that she could teach them some real English, and perhaps escape any ennui that might be inherent in a long summer in Yünnanfu. But she found the boys stupid; inclined just to sit and stare, with rarely a glimmer of intelligence lighting up their phlegmatic faces under their inevitable skullcaps. The fifth-

year class had been reading "Treasure Island" for a year, but no one knew who wrote it, and none had more than an uncertain smattering of the story. One young man was too far advanced for his class, but he refused to be promoted because he preferred to be the best man in his class, and he did not think he would be if he accepted the promotion. They proved utterly unprincipled cheaters, copying from one another during examinations as fast as the teacher turned her back, and resorting to trickery which suggested that the old examination halls where students were shut into separate cells with a grease-light, and let out before they finished only if they died, and then by a breach in the walls, may have been abolished too soon. Personally they struck me as rather "fresh," without the respect for a woman giving them something for nothing which real fellows would have had, and not a very clear idea of what or why they were studying, except that it was something offered almost for nothing.

But the government schools away out here in the west were not without their cause for praise, in view of the few years since China has turned to anything like our Western style of education. There were the usual insufficient and rather poorly housed lower schools, a normal with lots of boys and eight women students, and most imposing, and probably least needed just now, Tung Lu (Far East) University, with a very artistic assembly-room left over from Manchu days to quarrel with the too costly new Western building nearing completion. Here there were a number of instructors educated in the United States, especially in Kansas, as was also the provincial commissioner of education; and outside the north wall space enough had been found among the graves for an athletic field, though your average Chinese student prefers to take his exercise at some such game as ping-pong.

T'ang Ch'i-yao, governor since the revolution of the virtually independent province of Yünnan, except for one short year of vacation in Tonkin and Hong Kong forced upon him and eight of his wives by rebellious subordinates, was a man of interest not merely as an example of the Chinese modern ruler but because of the talk of his inheriting the shoes of Sun Yat-sen, who had already made him a "Lieutenant Generalissimo." I saw the governor first at a ceremony in the British mission hospital, to which he came with a large suite and a well-armed body-guard, riding high in a chair with four bearers who, as they ran, scattered pedestrians like a police patrol or an ambulance. His Chinese full-dress robes of rich silk were topped by

a stiff straw hat that may have been in honor of the foreigners gathered to receive him or merely proof of his Japanese training. Next time it was I who came in style, in a three-man chair to carry me up the long steps to the yamen from which spreads so splendid a view of the city, for it would have been discourteous of any foreigner with two "cash" to rub together to leave so distant a capital without an official call on its ruler. There was the usual tea-drinking in an anteroom, with a secretary-interpreter to do the honors, before word came that the governor himself was waiting in his big reception-room across the way. This was much more clean and orderly than many others in which I had been received by military overlords, and there was not, thanks no doubt to T'ang's foreign training, the usual crowding in and eaves-dropping of yamen hangers-on—though the ostensibly well-disciplined "generals" who sat outside at the table on which, at the instigation of the secretary, who may have mistaken it for an infernal machine, I reluctantly left my kodak, carried their curiosity so far that there was nothing but a black strip of film when I came to develop the pictures for which the governor was graciously moved to pose.

The absolute dictator of Yünnan Province was born in Tungch'uan, a week north of the capital, of moderately well-to-do gentry who had hitherto had little political standing. He was taught by a British missionary who is still in the country, learning some English which he professes to have forgotten, and took the bachelor degree under the Manchus, as had his father before him. About this time the Government decided to choose a few bright youths from the different provinces to go to Japan for study at government expense, a part of that scheme of modern militarization headed by Yuan Shih-kai which seems so largely responsible for China's present misfortunes. Many youths of more influence than T'ang were appointed first, but they were afraid to go, or their conservative parents in this far interior refused to let them, and finally the appointment fell upon T'ang. His parents also were afraid, but his missionary teacher urged until they were won over, and at seventeen the future governor was off for six years in Japan. He married first, that his family line should not suffer, but did not take this first wife with him. It is Chinese custom to leave the women at home; even the Amban who used to be sent to Lhasa did not take any of his wives with him on the long hard trip, on which they might be bewitched, but was furnished Tibetan women as part of his regular perquisites. The revolution broke out soon after T'ang returned to become an officer; he helped overthrow the Manchus,

thrashed a Kweichow general, and made himself dictator of Yünnan, which has remained independent since Yuan Shih-kai's monarchical movement a decade ago, though it was just then flirting with Peking as well as with the "Southern Constitutionalists."

Of our chat little remains except the knowledge that T'ang supports provincial autonomy or a federation of provinces as opposed to a strong central government. He named a few important things which he would leave to the central government, and reserve all else for loosely federated provinces. Peking, he said, is so corrupt from having so long been the place of rule that he would like to see Nanking, Wuchang, or Chengtu made capital. The first has many obvious things in its favor; the second he favored because it is in the geographical center of the country; the third, so that China could control Tibet; he did not add that, as he had hope of conquering Szechuan by that time, Chengtu would suit him splendidly as the capital of a kingdom of which he might be the head. He wished, of course, to call a peace-and-unity conference of all the warring factions; most of the many rulers of China do. He thought 20 per cent of the governmental income should be the maximum amount the nation should spend on defense—naturally he did not know the proportions of our national debt; and to rid militarists of political interference he would allow no troops in commercial centers, but would station them all at strategic points of national defense and permit the civil officials to develop their line of endeavor without hindrance. Yünnan, he added, was unfairly treated in Manchu days; it was still almost unknown, and he was now trying to develop it as a unit.

I did not of course ask him why he did not personally put into practice his scheme for curbing the military, why he did not leave to the central government the issuing of money, nor why, if he believed foreign affairs was also one of its duties, he ran his own and did not live up to Peking's treaties with foreign powers; any of these questions might have been embarrassing, and politeness is the first requisite in calling upon Chinese governors. Foreigners were even then paying *likin* in his province, contrary to treaty; he had set up his own salt inspection station, so that even the consuls and the business men had to appeal to him to get salt for their households and staffs, while the matter of currency was one of the chief annoyances of Yünnanese life.

Yünnan coins its own money, silver half-dollars without English words, and in other ways quite different from that of the rest of the country. That might be all very well, were not constant debasing of

the metal as well as ordinary counterfeiting rampant, so that not only had the nice new coins in circulation dropped well below their "Mex" value and the good old ones gone to Szechuan, in testimony of the truism that bad money always drives out good, but out of a hundred half-dollars one was likely to find that a dozen or a score were worth little or nothing. Moreover, even the new ones had disappeared from general circulation. For the past twelve years the Fu-tien Bank, in which the governor seemed to have more than an academic interest, had been issuing handy little paper notes, now at three to one with American currency and proportionately lower than "Mex," with a growing tendency to drop still lower. True, the notes promised, in both Chinese and English, to "pay the bearer on demand" their face-value; but if you went to the Fu-tien Bank to ask for the silver absolutely necessary on a journey in the interior, you found that "the manager is not in," or at most you would be given a hundred silver half-dollars when you asked for a thousand. Thus if you had credits from America, you sold your drafts for Hong Kong dollars, or French Indo-China *piastres* of similar value, both materially invisible, and then changed those into Yünnan paper, to find that you had about three times as many dollars as when you started. But if you were leaving town in any direction except by rail, the next move was to go out "on the street" and buy silver half-dollars at about 25 per cent premium, so that by the time you got out on the road you would have to be a champion in mental arithmetic to know what your money was worth and whether this or that was worth paying what was asked for it. To remedy this sad state of affairs the government had issued a proclamation that, on penalty of being shot or beheaded, paper money *must* be accepted as equal to silver, but Chinese history, if not common sense, should have told so well educated a man as T'ang Ch'i-yao that such commands carry only the length of a rifle-range, or at most a day or so outside the capital, and beyond the immediate reach of the governor's body-guard few would not rather risk their heads than take paper money. But here we are again losing ourselves in the mazes of Chinese currency, in spite of the best resolutions.

The money question was a deep thorn in the side of the postal authorities. Perhaps it was because the French consider Yünnan their special "sphere of influence" that the postal commissioner at Yünnanfu was a Frenchman, and it was no doubt evidence of a nice sense of balance that his first assistant was English. But the Chinese post-

office is a national institution, for all its foreign higher officials, and though the commissioners were constantly threatening to do so, they could scarcely make public announcement of the fact that the governor's money was off color by refusing to sell a dollar's worth of stamps for a Yünnan dollar. Naturally people paid their bills in other parts of the country by sending stamps. So after a few weeks of this bargain-counter experience the post-office announced that thereafter stamps would be sold only to those who presented the corresponding mail-matter and stuck them on then and there. This was hard on the foreigners, who had either to go to the post-office daily or send servants who might easily succumb to the temptation to throw the letters somewhere else than in the mail-box. So with an ingenuity that spoke well of their Chinese training the commissioners evolved a scheme of selling so many dollars' worth of stamps to each reliable foreign resident, and then requiring him to keep a ledger like the chit-book of Chinese social and business intercourse, in which the foreigner entered the number of stamped letters he was sending to the post by his coolie. A postal underling verified the count, took the letters, and stamped the book, so that when the foreigner sent for more stamps the commissioners could check up on what he had done with the last batch. New-comers with so few letters to send that it was not worth while to open a post-office account could get stamps of landlord, host, or friend, so long as they turned over their letters in order to get him credit for them.

Other petty annoyances of life in Yünnanfu had their habitat in the post-office. The missionaries no doubt felt that it was with special connivance of the powers of evil that foreign mail was nearly always delivered on Sunday evening, just about prayer-meeting time. Letters did very well, beyond the drawback of the long void between writing and receipt of the reply; but parcels were another story. We discovered that even our own nefarious Government, without hinting the scandalous fact at home, required the collection of fifty cents excess-postage on every parcel, irrespective of size, that came up to Yünnan, alleging that though both France and China are members of the postal union the difficulty of getting things up to the southwestern capital made this necessary. Thus it was impossible for the sender in America to fully prepay a parcel to Yünnanfu, though he did not suspect it, and before one could get word back to kind friends at home either to stop sending chocolate entirely, or to shake off the fear that the children might receive the parcel while parents were out and eat themselves to death, and send more than a bar at a time, one had to

pay many a fifty cents on fifteen cents' worth on which ten cents postage had already been paid at the other end, when better French chocolate could be bought in Yünnanfu at less than the original cost at home. It was hardly worth while to cable, yet the friend often overlooked that line in the letter until after one had moved on.

Besides, all parcels worthy the name had to have an agent to pass them through the customs at Haïphong, even though they came from another part of China; and if they were for the interior of the province, another agent of Yünnanfu was necessary to urge them on to their destination, though they had been duly addressed to it in the first place. If the French suspected the sender or the recipient or did not like the handwriting on the cover or were otherwise antagonized, the parcel might never get through their little neck of colonial territory at all. At least it was almost sure to be opened and examined by curious and not always immaculate-fingered customs officials or their Annamese assistants at Haïphong, where medieval conditions seemed to prevail in customs circles. That is, if a box of goods was billed to Yünnan from Hong Kong, or even from China itself, it must be opened and the contents set out on the wharf, the pickles in one row, the beans in another, the deviled ham in a third, and so on, to the bitter end of red tape. Naturally, in the course of all this labor the French inspectors and their Annamese helpers grow hungry and thirsty, and particularly American canned pears, peaches, cherries, and the like appeal in a hot climate. Then when all the red tape has been unwound and wound up again, whatever is left is repacked and sent on its way. I have seen my then landlord-host, who was forwarding agent for most of the Protestant missionaries in the province, unpack boxes in which one third of the cans meticulously put back into it were empty, rudely hacked open and red with rust. Sometimes only the remnants of a broken box, hardly good even for fire-wood, came up masquerading as the shipment mentioned on the bill of lading, and paid customs and transit dues accordingly. I know of the case of a precious Wedgwood tea-table, an old heirloom in a missionary family, that was repacked in Haïphong among other furniture and arrived with a stove-leg through it.

In view of the in-many-ways-excellent French rule in Indo-China, it is a pity that some one higher up there does not take in hand this petty thieving and the annoying and unnecessary, if not illegal, red tape that makes it possible, poorly excused surely by the mere physical accident of a slice of French territory protruding into the most available route from one part of China to another, and producing more

international ill will than the French gain in transit dues and cans of peaches. Soured residents of Yünnan insist that these annoyances are intentional, that the French are peeved because their hope that this province would become their special and exclusive preserve, and eventually perhaps a French "protectorate," has not been fulfilled. But they are probably due to nothing worse than the curiously labyrinthine-minded bureaucracy of France, which contrasts so strangely with the remarkable clarity and simplicity of the French in other matters. I had evidence to this effect when I went to the French consulate as interpreter for my landlord, bent on asking for a refund of a serious fine assessed against one of his foreign protégés in the interior that was due entirely to the tangles of red tape.

The consul was courtesy itself, but his answers were beyond mere Anglo-Saxon understanding:

"Why do your custom officers at Haïphong open all boxes merely passing through the country?"

"Why, to verify the bill of lading!"

"Yes; but if the shipment comes from a reputable firm in Hong Kong or the United States?"

"Ah, monsieur, laws are made for rascals, not for honest men."

"But if it is merely passing from one foreign country to another through your territory, or even from one part of China to another, what do you care what is in it?"

"Ah, but we must charge transit dues." (The French insist that they do not collect customs duties on goods passing through Tonkin, but merely "transit dues.")

"Why cannot things be sealed and sent through in bond?"

"We ask nothing better; but we must open all the same, to verify what is in them."

Perhaps the same reason makes it necessary to open a can of pears, to make sure that it does not contain pork and beans, but it would not have done to voice the suspicion there. Instead I sought light on whether it was necessary to open every box in a large shipment, resulting in incredible delay, to say nothing of loss.

"Ah, obviously, for it is the law. Many countries have troublesome laws. Naturally it is very annoying for Yünnan, but . . ." (One gathered that the "but" meant that the province should join Indo-China as a French colony and avoid all this trouble, or import only French goods, which come in free of French duty, annoyance, or delay.)

"The laws are made in France," the consul continued; "the cus-



toms officials are appointed in France; it is a separate service; it takes no orders from colonial officials."

He went on to relate a sad experience of his own. Coming in on a diplomatic passport, which gave him right to everything duty free, he somehow got separated from some Turkestan rugs he had bought in Singapore for \$250 "Mex" and was charged \$410 duty at Haïphong on them because they did not accompany him, and after months of negotiations he had been informed that it was against the law to refund! My host opined that this was the reason it was always impossible to pry a Frenchman loose from a centime, but that was not the only one of his Scotch remarks that I by no means literally translated in the course of our long and courteous interview, and with the consul's last illuminating remark to pass on to the client in the interior we took our leave.

On one of my first nights in Yünnanfu I strolled out to admire the new South Gate. In spite of strong opposition the governor had recently cut away the city wall on both sides of this old entrance and renovated it with new paint and decorations; now stone steps led to a museum he had installed on the top floor, passing on the way a pleasant place to sit and muse or view the city from the railed platform encircling the second story. Below, a pleasant little park with real foreign benches, green paint and all, a few promising young trees, two fountains, and good stone paving, in continuation of the restored Three P'ai-fang Street, had changed the now isolated and merely ornamental old gate from the likeness of an overworked tenement washerwoman to a lady of quality on her ample estate. Even the artistic old street-arch beyond, dating back at least to the days of the Mings, had been completely restored and redecorated into a fitting entrance to the populous southern suburb; and, neither last nor least, the space was walled by a semicircle of still unfinished two-story shops and residences of unusual sprightliness, on commandeered property for which the owners had received little or no payment. In short, here was real progress, if only of the superficial, typically Chinese sort; and one fancied the governor was very proud of all this civic improvement.

About daylight next morning I noticed a big cloud of smoke over in that direction. When I reached there the park, benches, fountains, and all, the whole semicircle of unfinished houses, and a large portion of the crowded southern suburb beyond were in flames. The governor had been amply warned when he ordered the breach in the city

wall about the old South Gate that calamity was sure to follow, and here it was, with the job hardly finished. Coolies were doing their worst for him, languidly carrying water one bucket at a time instead of *t'iao-ing*; swarms of his soldiers who could and should have formed a bucket-line loafed about, forming several times the police lines necessary and keeping out every one without influence, which did not exclude foreign men. The splendid old *p'ai-fang* that remembered the Mings, and which no one living would be capable of rebuilding, was gone, most of the new semicircle with it, and so big a section of the suburb beyond that for a time it looked as if even the American consulate would go, so soon after the consul and his wife had worked themselves thin finding, renting, and making it habitable. In the semicircle men who seemed to be owners or renters rather than firemen were feverishly tearing down doors, partitions, roofs for their costly tiles, everything of wood, valuable here as well as inflammable, leaving only a dusty *débris* of mud-brick walls. Rumor had it that corpses of small children and perhaps old people were found in the ruins afterward; at least there were some old cotton-wadded garments among the charred remains.

The town was divided between the certainty of the rank and file that this was a just punishment for the governor's temerity in breaching the wall, and the governor's own suspicion that some one of the superstitious masses, or one whose property had been confiscated, had set the fire; and I believe the governor won to the extent of having a few people shot as a good example. But fires are common in Yünnanfu, and often very destructive; besides, disaster never long upsets the Chinese, for rice must constantly be had for hungry mouths. Sellers of all manner of more or less useless odds and ends had soon spread out their wares in the burned section; makeshift shops sprang up literally before the ruins stopped smoking, and other merchants piled up the mud bricks that remained of their ruined buildings, put under them the more or less damaged goods that had not been completely consumed, and, leisurely, cheerful-faced, bargaining as they smoked their water-pipes, did business almost as usual.

The fire had been helped by the extreme dryness of everything, and people laid this also to the cutting of the wall. The French governor of Indo-China and his staff had recently been up for a confab with Governor T'ang, who had ordered a star placed on the South Gate as a memorial of the visit, and the people decided that this, too, brought bad luck and delayed the rains. All the region was in its seventh month

of absolute drouth. The soil of the fields, even the mud bricks of the houses, was split and cracked as if by earthquake; the air was so dry that not only did cigars disintegrate to powder but the very boxes they came in curled up and cracked in a single day. We found the dry air and the heat wearying, and either that or the altitude hard on the nerves, though that is natural when one first comes to a place so high in the air. The peasants began to see utter famine unless something was done about it soon. Day by day all kinds of services imploring rains were disinterred. People began to beat drums and form processions, to burn paper "money," to try out all the other time-honored aids against prolonged drouth. There were gongs and fire-crackers and ceremonies and parades every little while, day and night; the rain-dragon was paraded through the streets, a dozen coolies forming the vertebræ under his snaky green-cloth skin, and every one doused him with water, not always of the cleanest, as a hint of what was expected of him. The sun-god on the city gates was painted out and the rain-dragon put in his place, all to no avail. Then the butchers were accused of killing too many pigs, and the priests, abetted by the city fathers or whatever took their place, decreed that they must stop all killing and the people fast until the drouth was broken—and it clouded over almost at once, on the eleventh day after our arrival, a light mist rising where there had never been a hint of moisture between us and the farthest depths of the heavens before. Rains came and increased, turning the beautiful velvety browns of the dry mountain flanks to rather a monotonous spring green that spread over all the surrounding landscape; stretches of dry rock-like clods melted down into rice-fields in which men and women in palm-leaf rain-jackets set out rice-plants thrown to them in bundles, and herons came for the frogs that unwisely sang to them. In a way we were sorry; the edict against killing had rather suited us, for whereas our landlord's table had been offering its battalions of flies, liver and kidney stew and the like, now all the cook could find in the markets was such things as chickens, ducks, pheasants, and quail.

It seems Yünnan has to do this almost every year before the sun-god will loosen up and give the rain-god a chance, but this year it had been worse than ever. Like other attempts to monkey with nature in its natural course, however, this praying for rain seems to have its perils, or perhaps the rain-pray-ers overdid it. The water that had merely covered the bottom of the city moat rose to the flagstones of the humped bridge we so often crossed just outside the East Gate;

crows went "hah! hah! hah!" in their delight; rain poured day after day, week after week, with only now and then a short respite. Here and there the stone casing of the city wall fell off; now and again a mud-brick house collapsed; our former hosts in the eastern suburb reported that they were up all one night expecting the rice-fields about them to flow into their rooms, as they had already into the court on which they faced; business was impeded because people could no longer abuse the narrow streets by making them the overflow-space of the shallow little shops, where customers normally can stand only under the eaves; one must either wade and slip and slide along the slimy cobbles smooth-polished by centuries of sandal-shod feet or pay double rates for chairs which might also slip and break a collar-bone, as befell the commissioner of education. I know much of this only by hearsay, for I had started north before the prayers were answered in full, but I vouch for the testimony of my family.

It is more or less expected that in the rainy season there shall be delays and even breaks in the railway line to Yünnanfu, but after all the French claim to lose money on it, to keep it up only for political purposes and the hope of being some day permitted to continue it to the Yang Tze, according to their enemies, or out of national pride, as they themselves say. Hence there was little surprise or resentment at the first small breaks. In one or two places passengers had to get out and walk a little, perhaps take a boat, from one train to another. But it had often before been necessary to refuse baggage larger than the thirty kilos which coolies could carry on one end of their shoulder-poles. The long drouth had made great cracks in the earth this year, however, and the water poured into these day after day. The result in such mountainous and almost treeless country was disastrous. At the station four breaks in the line were admitted, then six, eight, ten—just how far it went I cannot swear, for by that time I was clear out of the province; but for at least seven weeks there were no through trains, no trains at all on many parts of the line, no first-class mail for three weeks, and carried by coolies even when it did come, eight weeks without any second-class mail, so that the newspapers at the club wore out from sheer handling, an engine down an embankment between two breaks, where the cranes could not get to it, kilometers of the line under deep water, a tunnel completely filled with mud, the telegraph line broken in one spot or another most of the time, the general manager up from Hanoï and unable to get down again, the flowery-tongued chief official at the Yünnanfu end tearing back and forth so

much that he hardly had time for an *apéritif* before dinner! The American woman domiciled in Mongtze came up to celebrate the Fourth and, much to her delight, even though accommodations were not without their risks to her reputation, was forced to remain eight weeks. A little tired-out missionary man from Canton, who had been looking forward for many years to a summer trip to delightful Yünnanfu, came up with only nine days to spare, and after biting his nails to the quick for two weeks he took chairs and coolies and such pieces of trains as still ran and his health and safety in his hands and started down on a trip that might take a month, as in the old days before the French connected the Yünnan capital with the outside world. Truly the prayers for rain had been overdone.

All this worried the people little; they had few letters to send or to receive; they could travel without a railroad; even if eggs went up to the unprecedented price of three for ten Yünnan cents because the weather kept the countrywomen from coming to market, that was mainly the foreigners' funeral. But when rice failed to arrive from Annam and the governor saw his opportunity and slapped so wicked a tax on every horse-load coming into town without French protection that no more came, and the rice in the fields threatened to be drowned out, and . . . In short, the government had to take charge of the rice situation and make a shop of the central tunnel in the South Gate, once the only entrance to that part of town, and sell rice to the people, who came for it with small tin cups in such flocks that the soldier-policemen had to ruin their voices with screaming and keep the now useless gates to the place more or less closed, and sometimes flail at the throng with their wands or flourish their rifles menacingly. People who had laid the drouth to the breaching of the city wall now began to suspect that the continued copiousness of the waters was what the gods had really planned to send down upon them for that sacrilege. It certainly was high time to do something again. Drums and gongs and processions, this time parading the sun-god, began once more, paper "money" again commenced to go up in smoke, every known means of calling off the rain-dragon and appeasing the evidently over-insulted sun-god were used, apparently all in vain. The priests and the city fathers again decreed five days without meat; the rain-dragon on the city gates was painted out and a brilliant new sun painted in his place, and still the rains poured. One might have expected such luck during the nefarious Year of the Pig just ended, but hardly with the brand-new cycle and the lucky Year of the Rat. Then the final step was taken.

The North Gate, by which the evil spirits of the rain were evidently entering the city, was closed, and for days half Yünnanfu went miles out of its way through the East or West Gate and waded and tramped around to the northern suburb, where many live and from which important roads leave.

This last harsh measure was evidently effective; the rains began gradually to subside. Some repairs were made in the railway, then some more. American and British business men faced with the task of furnishing southwestern China with such necessities as cigarettes and kerosene—the gasoline filling-stations naturally had not suffered—rushed down to Mongtze and beyond at the first opportunity, to fight for freight-cars in which to bring their precious boons to squint-eyed mankind up the hill. Bit by bit life settled down into its wonted pace, and by late September, when my family had to descend to the world below again, they were able to get through with no greater suffering than that entailed in spending a night at the notorious hotel of Laokay.

What Marco Polo evidently considered his best line, since he repeats it on almost every page, tells us that, "The inhabitants worship idols, use paper money, and are subjects of the Great Khan." Read "the governor" for the Kublai Khan of that day and the remark is still as true of Yünnanfu, indeed for most of China, as when Marco wrote it—if he did—some seven hundred years ago. Missionaries asserted that Yünnan is the hardest province in China to work in, because of the wide-spread tenacity of all the old Chinese superstitions. Gaudy gods in wayside street-shrines were to be found all over the city; during a certain festival-time passports through purgatory, just such linen-like tissue-paper ones with huge characters and red seals as those issued for earthly travelers in the province, with almost the same wording, were officially issued at ten Yünnan cents each to all those who had deceased relatives waiting to journey through the after-world, for whom such a "spirit passport," duly burned, was good for three days.

As becomes a superstitious city, Yünnanfu has many temples, not merely covering big tracts in the midst of town, like the monasteries of South America, but tucked away in the hills round about, often delightfully, not to say strategically, situated, usually with hard climbs between the world and their gates. In most cases the situation was more beautiful than the unkempt temples and their dirty priests, temples housing grain as well as gods, black coffins sometimes full of corpses, begging Taoist loafers in the head-dress they say was general among

Chinese men in the Ming days before the Manchus came to force their own cue upon them. The Temple of the Lo-han, the "500 Buddhas" foreigners call them, twenty-five *li* from town, was one of the finest of them in China, with plenty of light on its artistic, lifelike beings, dressed in gorgeous robes of all colors, rather than the usual stereotyped gilded figures in stiff rows in dark and dismal passageways. There was one figure with a fifteen-foot arm with which he was holding the moon in its place among the clouds; another rode a phenix like a cowboy; of course old man Longevity was there on his swan or whatever bird it is he bestrides; and back of the Buddhas was the military man of the province who vies with Confucius in popularity there, the one being the literary and this the military sage of the Chinese people.

One of the favorite excursions was out to the Copper Temple, with a solid bronze building, across ever higher foot-hills scattered with flowers in which the edelweiss was prominent. Near it was the elaborate tomb of the general whom Governor T'ang was reputed to have had done away with so that he could have one of his beautiful wives—the least reparation a governor could fittingly offer in such a case would be an elaborate tomb at which the descendants of the deceased can burn joss to his better fortune in another world. Then there was the Peach Blossom Temple, not so far from town, recalling that Yünnanfu has, among other products more in keeping with its altitude than its latitude, delicious peaches big as a prize-fighter's fist, which seemed to come on so suddenly that they were allowed to ripen, unlike most Chinese fruits, and at the height of the season sold for a cent each, so that even coolies and beggars could be seen wandering along eating such fruit as often imply a stock-broker's income. For such of these excursions as seemed too far on foot or too near to use a chair one could hire horses out on the broad expanse in the southern suburb that is still known as the execution-ground, or from certain establishments elsewhere, providing one did not take the word "horse" too seriously. For though they were numerous and cheap, the animals, almost always stallions, were tiny and slow, and like trained seals they operated only under the immediate eye of a boy *mafu* who must run behind and constantly urge them. But sometimes one got a splendid animal for its size, and a *mafu* that in time became devoted, and they could one and all climb or descend like circus-horses the endless stone stairways in the mountain roads on the most slippery day as easily and unhesitatingly as on the level. Better, perhaps, for almost every "road" out of the city was atrocious with badly worn flagstones on which a horse could

not jog and could only walk with difficulty, though some of them went striking out over the mountains for romantic corners of the globe, such as Talifu, whence on to Burma or neighboring Tibet.

One of our last Yünnanese trips together was out the West Gate to the canal-stream by which much of the produce of the country beyond comes to the capital, and on which a boat with all the rougher comforts of home—for which it served the capable boat-woman and her blind husband and tireless son—carried us past half-naked men incessantly raising water by sundry schemes into the eternally thirsty rice-fields in which women were still laboriously transplanting by hand, and finally across the head of the lake to the foot of Hsi-shan. High up the face of this, temples and monasteries are piled in precarious places, and higher still tunnel stairs and sacred grottoes and queer shrines have been cut in the face of the sheer rock cliff, elaborate passageways carved in solid granite that spoke of labor enough to give all the province the good roads it completely lacks. Higher and higher they went, until some lungs refused to function, and their owners missed a magnificent view across the great blue lake, the greater plain, and all the surrounding country with its row after row of ever bluer mountain ranges fading away in intricate labyrinths.



## CHAPTER XVII

### A JOURNEY UNDER "MILITARY PROTECTION"

FROM Yünnanfu there lay before me the longest and most nearly hazardous of my overland journeys in China. I planned to go northward to the Yang Tze, with a side trip into Kweichow, on into Szechuan, then down the great Son of the Sea and, if time remained, overland again to Canton. A trip from America to Europe is simple compared to the complicated process of preparing for such a journey. First of all I must have permission to go. Being the most isolated province, Yünnan is considered, perhaps not without good reason, the most dangerous for foreigners, and for some years they had not been expected to go beyond the capital without the consent of their consuls and, through them, of the provincial authorities. One might, to be sure, set out without this; had I been refused official permission I should have had little choice but to do so, since with most of us our chosen work comes first. But in that case if anything happens to the traveler he has no legal status. The local authorities would perhaps not physically stop him, but, Chinese ways being more subtle, they might see to it that bandits who otherwise might never have known of his existence would make it unpleasant for him. The line of demarcation between ostensibly legal rulers and the outlaw hordes of present-day China is so dim that it is something like taking out insurance to let the legal authorities into your confidence. Moreover, to go without permission would be an unkindness to one's consul, who, like the pianoplayer, is doing the best he can.

This first obstacle was surmounted more easily than I had hoped. The route I proposed to follow was reported less dangerous than for some time, and our consul was willing to let me run the risk if I would not attempt to take my family with me, and that I had never for a moment thought of doing. So a special American passport for the province, in the two languages involved, was duly stamped by the Chinese and delivered to me—never to be asked for from that day to this.

The next question was a servant. Those of Yünnanfu are notoriously poor, but it was my good luck to have Yang Chi-ting turn up and

apply for the job soon after I reached there. He was a young man born out on the borders of Tibet, of some Tibetan or other non-Chinese blood, though like all the tribespeople he posed as strictly Chinese when competing for a job, unable to understand that we rather prefer the naïveté of the tribesman. As such, though he might be more easily cheated by the Chinese along the way, he would probably take less squeeze, possibly none at all. For the past two years he had been cook to an American on an official mission in the province, who had opportunely just gone home. He spoke his mandarin slowly and distinctly, as if his native Likiang dialect were more familiar and his Chinese learned later in life. This was a great asset; for though two years in the country had given me a considerable vocabulary of the picked-up sort, I did not easily catch things in the half-enunciated, whirlwind speech of the masses, particularly where there were dialectical peculiarities.

Having traveled in style with his previous employer, Yang was probably somewhat disappointed under his expressionless Chinese mask at my plans, as set forth in the fluent Yünnanese of my Scotch host. I could not furnish him a horse, as his former master had done; he would not merely have to cook but be a general servant, even attending to my mount. If he had been completely Chinese he would have found some plausible excuse to withdraw at that point, for though as a mountaineer walking meant little to him, your real Chinese servant does not combine jobs. He is a cook or a "boy" or a coolie or a *mafu*, but never a combination of even two of those. But Yang was so naïve that he told the truth about his former wages, and we came to terms, he getting a job where there had seemed little chance of one, I getting what was perhaps the best servant and native road-companion I had in China. True, I did not need him during my forty days in the capital, but he felt that a retainer of ten Yünnan dollars a month would be a proper reward for waiting, and for such odds and ends as I might find for him to do. Once we did start, he was to have \$15 a month, the equivalent of an American five-dollar bill, while in Yünnan, and \$18 "Mex" when outside his native province. It went without saying that he was to feed himself, like any Chinese servant, but it was agreed that when I was through with him I was either to find him another satisfactory job with foreigners or pay his way back to Yünnanfu. The interview thus happily ended for all concerned, my new assistant went around the sitting-room and bowed low to each of us individually before he withdrew to make his bed in the outer court. From the vantage-

point of Broadway five dollars a month does not seem an exorbitant reward for walking thirty miles a day over the worst mountain trails at the height of the rainy season, and doing all the work that would fall to a general servant besides; but I had ample evidence during my journey that it seemed generous to Yang, for I often heard him astonishing the natives along the way with a statement of his high wages.

Transportation was the next problem, and it had two phases. Though I intended to walk as usual, I did not want to be forced to walk all the time with such roads and weather. Most of the few foreigners who knew anything about travel beyond the railroad advised a chair at such a season, saying that there is no more dreary experience than sitting on a horse in the rain all day, that I would have to feed a horse, that it might take sick, even die—all things equally true of an automobile. Moreover, I am not of a kidney to let other men do my walking for me, and at least a horse would take orders more exactly and do less grumbling than chair-coolies. Yang and I often went to the horse-market on a muddy bank of the city moat, where everything was offered from stallions little inferior to those splendid ones commandeered by the soldiery down to the most incredibly living corpses, but in the end I acquired a gray gelding, born not far from Yang's own place of origin and known to him from its experience with his former master. The color is considered unlucky by the Chinese, perhaps because it is so nearly that of mourning, and I was warned that I would not get much for "that skin" when I got through with it, but the animal was so much larger than the average stallion ponies of Yünnan that throughout the trip he was always referred to in accents of wonder by the Chinese along the way as *ta ma*—the "big horse." Naturally the good native-made saddles on the French cavalry model that sold in Yünnanfu at ten American dollars, saddle-bags and all, caused no less comment than the unfortunate color and the extraordinary size of the animal.

How best to transport my modest baggage was not quite so easily settled. Besides the cot and bedding which no foreigner of sense goes without in China, there must be a simple cooking outfit and some canned supplies, for with the exception of meat, a few vegetables, and perhaps some fruits, we would be able to get little along the way. With my clothing, photographic materials, rolls of silver half-dollars, and all the other necessities and odds and ends, all this indicated at the start four coolie- or two horse-loads, the perishable things in pigskin-covered boxes, the rest in baskets to save weight. Now, a coolie makes about the same speed as a horse on the roads of western China, but as he

carries only half as much he costs somewhat more. On the other hand one's things are battered about much more on horses than swinging at the ends of coolie-poles. It happened that the government and the principal foreign firms were just then organizing a caravan of two thousand horses and mules, the former sending out opium and silver and the latter oil and cigarettes, which did not tend to keep prices down; besides, horsemen did not care to set out with two or three horses through a country noted for banditry when they could join a big caravan with a large military escort. For a time I planned to go with the caravan; final quotations were \$20 per horse for the twelve-day trip to Chao-t'ung, half-way station on the overland journey to the Yang Tze, while I could get coolies at a dollar a day for the same fixed stages—twice what Yang was paid. But his job was more or less permanent, and walking empty-handed along the trails of Yünnan is quite a different matter from doing the same thing with a hundred pounds across the shoulders. While I might have the protection of numbers with the caravan, however, it would swallow up all the inn and other facilities every night before I could get to them; I should have no choice of time of departure, distance covered, places of rest; the two or three animals that carried my things would probably toss them down anywhere with the rest at the end of the day, leaving us to find them as best we could, and after all it is no sport to be mixed up for weeks with two thousand animals and almost as many drivers, in a way the lowest of Chinese, for coolie carriers are gentlemen and aristocrats by comparison. I decided in the end to take carriers.

The wise foreign traveler in the interior of China gets his coolies through a foreign resident, preferably a missionary, who in turn gets them from a coolie *hong*, the head of which he knows. There is a written contract on tissue-paper with many Chinese characters and the red stamps of official seals, and an advance of at least half the price agreed upon for the trip; for the *hong*-master works just as the shipping-master for sailors does—or at least did in my sailor days—except that he gives more guarantee for the men he supplies. I had to pay two thirds in advance, and since what the *hong*-master, who has perhaps been housing and feeding the coolies since their last job, does not pocket of this himself is usually left with their families or spent before they start, the traveler must expect to begin a few days out to advance enough daily for them to live on, so that they are well ahead of him most of the journey—financially speaking only—and have very

little coming to them at the end of it. Hence the wisdom of a written official guaranty—and at that, obedience to the traveler's orders depends mainly on an occasional feed of pork and the tip expected at the end.

During all these and other preparations I had misgivings about the size of the military escort which the provincial authorities would choose to send with me. I had heard so much of the big forces assigned to foreigners traveling in Yünnan that I was not at all sure a mere vagabond could afford to travel there at all. Government officials, and our oil and tobacco sellers with unlimited expense accounts, often had as many as five hundred soldiers to protect their precious hides. To be sure the government provides them, but one must tip them something daily. One might adopt the policy that if the Chinese Government cannot protect a foreigner without special guards it is up to that government to pay them, but in practice this would only result in making the soldiers walk thirty or sixty miles and back while their comrades were loafing in barracks at the same wages, if any. Yet if one pays them too much, every commander along the way may send more than are needed, just to get them off his hands and have some one else support them until he needs them himself; if the escort is too small it may be worse than none, for bandits who would not have attacked an unescorted traveler at all may attack merely to get their rifles and cartridges. Escort fees are of course a form of tax on foreigners, yet if they refuse an escort, the officials have only to send a band of soldiers ahead to play bandits—as has been known to happen. Business men of Yünnanfu suggested fifty Yünnan cents per soldier per day, and so did the consuls, but missionaries insisted that twenty cents was ample. I compromised on twenty-five, and always got the smile of satisfaction, perhaps because my mode of travel proved that I was not a man of importance, while the fact that I indulged in a cigar now and then, and still wore no priest's cassock, showed that I was no missionary. Even at that a few hundred soldiers a day would soon have knocked me financially flat. Well, I could perhaps run away from them, or something.

But I had been unnecessarily worrying. I might have known that I would get from the consul and the local authorities a more proper appraisal of my value than if I set it myself, or even let my family set it. Early on the morning of June 25, which I had informed the official world was the date set for the departure, there marched into our host's compound in the eastern suburb four—no, not four hundred—four

individual soldiers, three in almost full uniform, each with a kind of gun and one with an umbrella.

The five coolies—including one hired to carry a load for my host to the missionaries at Chao-t'ung—who turned up toward noon were not of prepossessing appearance. My host had done his best to get men who did not smoke opium, and the *hong* boss had promised to furnish them; but such men are hard to find in Yünnanfu. The five who came in charge of the plainly opium-smoking *hong*-master had about them that something by which one recognizes the sailor whom the shipping-master has just dragged out of a final debauch before signing him on. There was the usual preliminary skirmish of any long expedition. The men stood around on one dirty bare foot in its new straw sandal, then on the other, eying the loads as if they much preferred not to carry them at all. No wonder, for once started it means hard work day after day instead of loafing about the tea-houses. Also they were sparring among themselves, sizing up every half-load, each planning how he could avoid the awkward pieces. An equitable arrangement would be to change loads from day to day, but your Chinese coolies never do that. Once a clumsy cargo is forced upon a man, he is stuck with it for the rest of the trip, barring actual injury or real sickness, when coolies are as helpful and comradely as one could wish. After each man had slouched up and lifted each half-load several times, and my host and I began to get noisy with insistence, they picked up their flat hickory carrying-poles, well worn and colored in the middle with the sweat of many another hard journey, and moved toward the loads. I made sure that no pole was cracked, as one broken on the road often means that the whole caravan is delayed until another can be found. Then I noted that the poles were bare, and knew that another argument and more delay were forthcoming. In Yünnan, as in almost all parts of China, the *t'iao-fu* is expected to furnish his own ropes. Since these were to work for a foreigner, however, who, the gossip of the tea-houses told them, had recently come to the country, the usual trick would be tried of making him buy ropes. I knew each move in order,—this stepping forward with the bare *bandan*, the apparent discovery, and the announcement thereof with a simulation of great surprise, that the boxes and baskets to be carried were ropeless, my gruff information that I knew the ropes in another sense, the noisy chatter of all five trying to convince me that I was wrong, the calling upon the coolie boss to confirm the statement, and his vociferous yet hangdog confirmation, as much as to say, "Of course you realize why

I am saying what is not true, unless you are a fool, but I do not wish to get a bad name among the coolies, nor yet on the other hand with this missionary of certain and good pay, who often calls upon me for men."

A new-comer might have feared that the shrieking fellows would leave the job entirely rather than lose face as well as the price of ropes by giving in; but the man of experience worries not at all, or only at the time lost and the unnecessary uproar, knowing that with the contract signed and the advance taken it would be almost as much as a coolie's neck is worth to report the matter to the nearest magistrate. A mild reminder of this sent one of the men moving reluctantly out into the market, to come back eventually with ten ropes of cheap native fiber, probably of the husk of the cocoanut, and a wry smile that was meant to imply that it did not matter after all. The amount involved in such cases is of course not worth all the trouble, and if it would end with that one would willingly pay for the ropes, glad to add something to the hard, drab lives of new traveling companions. Unwise new-comers, impatient sellers of oil and tobacco, with ample funds and the knowledge of how eagerly the world beyond is waiting for their supplies, often succumb to such tricks. But they discover before long that this is but an opening wedge of extortion which, if admitted, will become a mighty breach before the journey is over, not only a considerable loss of money but probably of their power to command.

The smallest but most manly, or least dissipated looking, of the carriers, who had already proved his superiority by getting the two missionary loads that were lighter than any of mine, was made spokesman and chief of the rest by the *hong*-master: the men stood up under their respective burdens and set them down again a dozen times; they readjusted the ropes so that the loads would hang well down from the ends of the poles, yet high enough to clear ordinary obstacles along the way; they arranged them to swing conveniently for walking, and at last all seemed ready. I gave the order to march. The men stood up once more, all together this time, like an orchestra that has finished tuning up and is prepared to start, their backs very straight, which is the secret of carrying such heavy loads, made last grimaces of disappointment mixed with humor at the hard life they had to lead, and jogged away through the compound gate, followed by Yang Chi-ting driving my newly shod horse, saddled like a general's at his funeral. Two of the rag-doll soldiers dragged themselves to their feet and surrounded my precious belongings, while the other two gathered on either

side of me and Rachel, who was to stroll out along the atrocious flagstone street to the wireless towers beyond the suburb from which we had often started more happily on shorter excursions. Even if my schedule held, it meant that I was not to see my family again for more than three months, and that we would have no means of communicating except through the Chinese post, fortunately as excellent as any in the world, given the means of transportation available. For I correctly foresaw that I would not get far away before the telegraph system of China, as bad under Chinese management as the postal service is good under foreigners, would not be able to serve me. But as I hurried on alone after the already straggling procession, such thoughts were more or less lost in the vain attempt actually to visualize myself, so often without a single companion on my journeys, setting out with a veritable expedition of ten men and a horse.

It is a pity that the caustic individual who made it known that the road to the less popular but most populous section of the after-world is paved with good intentions is not familiar with those from Yünnanfu to anywhere, for in that case an adequate description might have been evolved to bring to the Western mind a clear notion of them which I am completely incompetent to produce. The roads would be hard enough on ordinary feet, such as those of horses, even though newly shod, and correspondingly slippery, or of a mere foreigner, if they were merely of stone. But add to this that they are never level, never straight, never unbroken, and you will understand how much Yünnan travel is like wandering erratically through a stone-quarry smoothed in spots by generations of straw-sandaled, but otherwise bare and weather-darkened, coolie feet, which seem so impervious that they resent an unstoned yard and cling to the narrow road in preference to the smooth earth path which sometimes grows up beside it for short distances.

I was not so much aware of this on that first day's stage, a mere stroll of twelve miles, most of it in the brown study so natural at the beginning of another long journey with no certainty of the outcome, adjusting myself to the pace of my companions, getting used to the minor annoyances of the soldiers, and in general shaking down into the efficient expedition that was needed for the journey ahead of us. Hence my gray gelding, visibly showing unwillingness mixed with a kind of Chinese fatalism at leaving the city where he had loafed since his former master went back to Mei-kuo—for even the horse undoubtedly thought of our happy land by its Chinese name—strolled most of the



journey carrying only the gleaming new imitation of a French cavalry-saddle. We had set out in what the French call a *crachin*, a kind of falling mist pretending it is a rain, but the weather could not have been kinder to us on this preliminary journey of a bare forty *li*. The hills about us, gay with many-colored poppies during February and March, were bare now in some places, though the rains had started them all green, and in others they were covered with wheat-stubble or potato-vines, especially the latter, for in spite of its tropical location Yünnan is the great potato-producing province of China proper. We passed two women standing on their little bound feet in a bare mud yard surrounded by a bare mud wall, threshing wheat with flails to all appearances exactly like our own. We loafed along for four hours, with one fifteen-minute stop at a tea-house, a stone road all the way, and almost before I realized that we were actually started the first town grew up about us and we found ourselves in the single, slimy, cobbled, narrow street—a long street of unbroken houses, with a city gate at each end—of Ta Pan Ch'iao, which, for those who must have the romance of Chinese place-names ruined by knowing what they mean, may be translated Big Plank Bridge.

Although he had been about me for forty days, I had not had much opportunity to try out Yang Chi-ting. When his first real job came, he went at it with a will and quickly overcame the impression of my late host, Scotch and correspondingly pessimistic, that as a tribesman he would not be able to make people at the inns step around. He was mistaken. We marched, horse and all, into the largest inn of Ta Pan Ch'iao, and Yang quickly began making it clear that I must have the best room in the house and must have it alone. This establishment did not bear out the terrible tales I had heard of the inns of Yünnan. We found an up-stairs room twice as large as the average single room in an American hotel, out of which Yang quickly drove half a dozen coolies, who had taken up quarters for the night by lying down on straw mats of mattress thickness that covered most of the floor, strangely enough of wood. He made the inn's chief servant throw out the mats in a hurry, there being no other furnishings, and the next thing I knew Yang was having the place vigorously swept and sprinkled with water; my carriers brought up such of my loads as I called for, and we soon had my private mosquito-net bed set up, with the biggest of my "horse-boxes" as a seat. Yang found a round table-top to put on two sawhorses; it was a bit too low, but as he washed it without my even suggesting it I could not cavil at my luck.

Judging from the few travelers in town it looked as if I might be so lucky as not to be crowded out anywhere on the trip, for all make about the same stages. There was not a soul except Yang in to see me from the time I entered the room until I left, a most unusual Chinese inn experience. I took a short walk for exercise' sake, and then to notes, accounts, and reading and writing, until, just as we had to light my lantern and a candle, Yang appeared with a plain but satisfying supper of well-cooked young chicken, boiled potatoes, and cocoa. From day to day he found plenty of fresh eggs, fresher and many times cheaper than in our own land, with mutton and chickens, but no fruit; except for milk, cocoa, sugar, bread, jam, and the like, I did not have to use many of my stores and could have spared perhaps a whole coolie-load of them. Evidently Yang was going to prove a success as soon as I got him rid of a few expensive habits which two years with a man backed by the U. S. Treasury had given him, and taught him those of my own peculiar personal tastes that differed from those of his last master. As he was distinctly intelligent, for his class, he soon got the idea that I did not wish to have this "face pidgin" put on, and he turned out to be as good a cook, boy, and *mafu* combined as the three we had taken on my trip with the American major to Lanchow. Nor was he so omnipresent as Chang, with his more or less English, had been then.

I did not expect my luck to continue indefinitely. When I awoke at daylight it was raining, as it seemed to have been all night. Yang came to apprise me of that evident fact soon afterward, and by the time he had my breakfast ready the head coolie came to add his testimony to the all too apparent truth with, "*Hsia yü-ah, Hsien-sheng.*" This meant that there would be breath and time lost in starting the carriers, though they had been repeatedly and plainly informed that they were hired to make the regular stages "rain or no rain." I put those focal words into my best and most forcible Chinese, and whether or not it was grammatically and tonally correct, the head coolie went down to apprise the others of the sad news. As at this season it was almost sure to rain almost all the time, there was nothing to do but take the bull by the horns, or the coolies by the slack of their loose pants, and settle the matter once for all. This was not really so hard as it may sound, for your coolie of southern China is so much more used to rain than are those of the usually cloudless north, who seem to labor under the delusion that they were made of salt or sugar, that once you show him you will make life miserable for him if he does



The *bay-fu* of mountainous southwestern China commonly carry much heavier loads than this and rarely sit down to rest



It is not unusual for the coolies of Yunnan and Szechuan, who *bay* on their backs instead of using the more common shoulder-pole, to carry two hundred pounds day after day over atrocious mountain trails



Among my fellow-travelers northward through Yünnan were a blind girl and her mother, both with bound feet, who rode in what the Chinese call a *hwa-gan*.



Here is only a hint of how incredibly atrocious was much of the trail, often belly-deep in liquid mud over slippery stones and further hampered by endless mule caravans, through Yünnan in the rainy season

not travel irrespective of the weather and the state of the roads your troubles on that one score are mainly over.

There was to be another serious trouble, which I had more or less expected, foreseen, guessed, and anticipated. When I had finished the real American breakfast that Yang produced from my baggage abetted by the hens of Ta Pan-Ch'iao, the coolies had not yet come to rope up their loads. Word sent down by Yang still failing to produce them, I went down to investigate in person. I found all five of them still lying soggily on their mat-covered platforms in the little inn room they had hired, with the mangy-looking quilts furnished therewith, at a few coppers, and all smoking opium, which meant that they had not yet even breakfasted, for your coolie opium-smoker must eat after he smokes before he is able to carry his load without falling sick. It took some storming and nearly an hour of time before I got them to arranging their loads and set out with orders for them to start quickly behind me.

Later in the day, when we came to the regular market village where travelers eat lunch, my coolies lay down with others almost beside me as I ate, got out the opium outfit each carried, and went to smoking; the odor of the drug was thenceforth in my nostrils almost all the time that I was not out on the road. Everybody—except Yang, as I discovered to my delight—seemed to smoke it in this part of the world, where the poppy grows so well. Nearly all coolies carried their opium-pipes and the tin boxes for their lamps openly on their loads; any miserable little tea- or rice-shop sold it as freely as tobacco, half thimblefuls of liquid amber poison at ten Yünnan cents, which last ten to fifteen minutes—and the great majority do not earn the dollar a day of my coolies.

All day long it rained as easily as a spigot left open by a careless housewife gone for the summer. In some ways those who had urged a chair were right; it would have been in several respects more agreeable than sitting out in the rain on a horse all day, day after day as it proved. But a cavalry rain-coat left over from my A.E.F. days, leggings and rubbers, the half of the army poncho that was not wrapped about my cot tied over my knees, particularly one of the big varnished Yünnan coolie hats that are so much better than the umbrella advocated by some, on top of my tropical helmet that was needed the moment the sun came out again, kept me fairly dry, except that water seeped into my shoes. But travel is so slow with coolie carriers on Yünnanese roads that to while away the time on a poking horse one must read or smoke, and in

the rain I could hardly do either, though I could have done so in a chair. Perhaps the worst drawback was that it was too difficult in all this accoutrement to get off and walk for a change.

The atrocious road of the second day wound and contorted through a dreary rocky country with now and then an apricot orchard. Nearly every hut had at least one big surly but cowardly dog, often with a bell on. We met pack-trains of horses and mules and men bringing out oil, hides, long pheasant feathers, hams with the feet sticking out of the packages, in contrast to the goods going in which we were to overtake later,—opium, silver money, American oil, British-American cigarettes, and general supplies from the outside world. Some travelers were going in my direction, for all the weather, and we saw one another so often, especially at the regular noon and night stopping-places, that they soon seemed old acquaintances. Among them was a blind girl and her mother on their way northward in the simple two-bamboo chairs which the Chinese of the southwest call *hwa-gan*, both of course with bound feet, though with one affliction one might have supposed that the girl could have been spared the other. The rocky road climbed and squirmed its way at last into Yang-lin, one of a number of towns among trees pitched all along the edges of a great flooded rice-plain, its two pagodas on hills commanding the town to the east. It had loopholed mud towers which suggested the dangers of bandits, but it was evident that the magistrate of this region did not fear much for my safety, for my guard had decreased from the four soldiers of the first day to a single man in two knee-high garments of soldier cloth and armed only with a big ragged hat. Another, equally unarmed, had joined him for the afternoon. They were the "yamen runners" of which one reads in tales of travelers in old Imperial China, whose duty it was to pass the letter about me from Yünnanfu on to the next magistrate. I made it the rule thenceforth that if the guard was not armed it was evident no guard was needed and there would be no tip, or at best a very small one; but it took Yang some time to make the reason for this even half plain to the simple fellows.

Here again we found a two-story inn, with wooden-floored rooms opening on a wooden balcony overhanging the yard, and so far removed from noisy Chinese guests that I looked forward to a good night's sleep, something one hardly expects on the road in China. These inns were a great improvement over the mud dens with Mother Earth as floor with which I had hitherto been regaled on my overland trips. As the night before, I could look down into the court and see

the cooking, washing, and other domestic processes, which had its advantages and disadvantages. The women and girls wading about in the mud and filth below wore little wooden troughs for their heels in place of sandals, with only the cloth bandages on their crippled feet. My idea of zero in sport is to hobble on bound feet along the stone roads or mud streets of southern China, yet even the little girls high up in the mountains along this Yünnan-Szechuan "highway" all had them, if they were Chinese, with bright red cloths wound like wrap-leggings about what might have become calves.

Unfortunately a sybaritic young man, traveling toward the capital with two rowdy soldier guards, moved in next door to the room Yang had prepared for me, and as there was only a thin half-partition of wood between me and their constant chatter, and two loud-voiced dogs in the yard, not to mention fleas and the constant stench of burning opium, and a pouring rain all night to make me dream of coolie trouble in the morning, even if the horse and I could travel, I have in my day known better nights. I carried no watch, since one of the chief joys of the road is to escape what a watch stands for, but it must have been nearly nine when I got my opium-drugged coolies under way next morning. The rain had completely flooded the stone road out of Yang-lin, so that we had to make a great detour by a trail that was a winding mass of mud beyond description. All the country round about was flooded, and people had set up little shelters from which they net-fished in the rushing mudlets formed by the constant down-pour. Wallowing in the mud, I would have given a good deal for some of those flagstone roads I had so often cursed. It was a mystery how the coolies could carry at all, even though their straw sandals were shod with iron points, for we slipped and slid and sprawled unmercifully, and when I thought of skating up and down those mud slopes like an upright toboggan with a hundred pounds swinging from the ends of a pole across my shoulders, I felt no great longing to change places with them, wet as I was. The man with my most breakable cargo slipped and dropped it twice during the day, a most unusual thing with Chinese coolies, who treat any load as if it were filled with eggs; but opium evidently had something to do with it, for the mishap came just on setting out after his morning and noonday smokes respectively.

The four soldiers who had been sent with me from Yang-lin even begged straw sandals, which cost an American cent a pair, but they were of some help in pushing on the coolies. After so slow a day that

it was two in the afternoon before we reached the noonday stopping-place and dark before we finished the regular stage at Yang-kai, we found that slough of a street miscalled a town already crowded with soldiers and a large part of the great caravan I had at one time thought of joining. It had halted here for a day because of the rains, and we had overtaken it. After much urging from Yang and the refusal of a tip until they made themselves useful, my escort got me lodging up-stairs in an old ruin of a two-story building about a court. My boxes were covered with mud, the outside pigskin broken, but the contents were not even damp. We found a table and a sawhorse, and I was made as comfortable as any one could be imprisoned by rain when eager to get on. In fact, with Yang and my baggage I could be comfortable anywhere.

There I spent two nights and the day between, which happened to be the fifth anniversary of my marriage. Fate no doubt forced me to celebrate it thus as punishment for leaving so soon before that auspicious date, but my itinerary had seemed to require it. The other person concerned was only fifty miles away, far less as the crow flies—but I am no crow. It poured all night and all day as if the sea and the sky had changed places. Moreover, my horse was decidedly under the weather. Since the second night it had refused to eat, and had grown so weak that I had been forced to wade and wallow all the last twenty *li* into this miserable village. Yang called in a native leech. With the insistence of his calling the world over on being rewarded irrespective of results, he demanded in advance the quite evidently exorbitant price of a dollar for a dose of some mixture that looked like wet concrete, which he administered with a big home-made thing of spoon shape, after tying the horse's head by the lip high on a pillar of the old ruin in which I lodged. We paid and he doped again in the afternoon. But the horse continued to pace around his pillar, often pausing to stretch with pain, and giving other evidences of illness besides complete loss of appetite. Had there been any way of disposing of him and his equipment or of getting him back to Yünnanfu, I should have admitted that nature never intended me to ride and should have reverted to my natural form of locomotion. It is really no trouble to walk as far and as fast as a *t'iao-fu* can carry. In fact, I often regretted on that trip that I could not be as free from others, man or beast, as in the good old days in South America. Fortunately I knew the risks of getting marooned in one of these dismal, Andean-like hamlets, and had brought with me half a coolie-load of books. Even my wife had laughed at my paying coolie-hire



for so much reading-matter, but I was glad of it all before this journey was ended.

At noon the coolies came to ask for the twenty cents each they were to get for any day's delay, whereupon, knowing not only what would become of it, but that they were only too glad to loaf on so miserable a day, I told them to get ready to start after lunch. But they hastily said there were no inns—no *pukai*, or quilts, they put it—where they could stop without making the regular stages, often true enough in interior China, where stopping-places are sometimes as fixed as those of a railroad train. Then they wanted another advance of a dollar each, in face of the written agreement not to expect more until the seventh day. Though they had been paid in Yünnanfu eight of the twelve dollars each they were to get for the trip, of which they had not yet done one fifth, evidently they had already squandered for opium whatever the *hong*-master had left them. I gave them instead one of the pork feeds with which I had decided to indulge them, although the agreement absolved me from this in view of their unusually high wages; but they were angry because I had Yang buy them the pork instead of giving them the money for it, which would of course have gone for opium rather than the food they must have if they were to continue next day.

My example seemed to remind the Chinese that the tumbling mud-brick ruin was habitable, so that first a group of tawny countrymen and then a gang of coolies of less courteous manners moved into the mud rooms on either side of me, built big fires in the middle of the floor, and had a noisy party, chattering most of the night. Then the man and female of the house had a quarrel, and for hours she chanted curses and promised to keep it up all night—the dogs barking with her—now threatening to drown herself, now wandering out into the flooded fields as if to oblige us by carrying out the bluff. While her husband would surely not otherwise have cared if only he could get rid of that incessant nerve-torturing voice, her spirit would make life miserable for him if she died in this way on his premises; besides, probably he could not afford even such a funeral as a female requires. When I turned in she was still making the soaked atmosphere miserable and the same endless downpour was still raging, here and there dripping through the roof of my ruin, so that I had to cover my mosquito-net framework with rain-coat and poncho.

In the morning the rain had taken a holiday; even the sun reappeared, though the incessant deluge was sure to have left the unstoned



This seller of "eating snakes" in Nanning suffered many perforations of the wrist for his kindness in posing before my camera



Millions of the nurse-maids of China are little bigger than the charges they tote about on their backs

the foreign customs officers had a watchman going about beating a bamboo from dark till dawn, saying it was the only way to be sure he kept awake. Soldiers were numerous, many of them wearing fingerless mittens of the kind our grandmothers knitted, though in the cold North, where chapped hands show how much more they are needed, any "garment for the hands" except the ends of too long sleeves are unknown among Chinese who have not succumbed to foreign influence. Some of the women carried hand-warmers in the form of a perforated pan full of burning charcoal, usually up against their hips under the skirts of their jackets.

Lungchow, like most of Kwangsi, was just then politically an adherent of Peking. The year before Cantonese troops had taken the town while the defense commissioner—who spoke good French—was off his guard, his eyes perhaps turned west instead of eastward. Lungchow claimed, and seemed to have ample proof, that Sun Yat-sen offered a silver dollar each to deserters who joined him with their rifles, and the town lost many of its defenders, until some of them were recaptured and shot. But that of course is time-honored and legitimate Chinese warfare. The Cantonese looted the place and after a reign of terror in which they cut up their enemies and ate their hearts and livers, carrying such delicacies openly in their hands like so much pork, they fled, carrying off sixty-three girls. The women retaliated by chopping into many pieces a Canton man who had been left behind wounded or ill, or who had overslept. These are not mere legends of bygone centuries but things of to-day which foreign residents know to be facts, if they did not actually see them. Whatever may be thought of him in the rest of China and in foreign lands, the people of western Kwangsi look upon Sun Yat-sen and his clique as the worst curse that ever befell them.

Whoever the ruler the people suffer. When the fat general in power here now by the support of a relative in the provincial capital returned on the heels of the Cantonese he issued ten million paper dollars, which quickly fell to the hundredth part of their face value in the exchange-shops. But the people had no choice than to accept them for what they pretended to be. One merchant who refused was fined twenty thousand silver dollars; another, twice that; still another was sentenced to be shot for the same offense, but he was let off on the pleading of his fellows, and the payment of a hundred—finally bargained down to sixty—thousand dollars. Everything is bargainable in China; it is not at all uncommon for people to try to get stamps

at the post-office for less than their face-value. Then, having had value received for his spurious notes, the general, thanks apparently to some tricky policy rather than to a pricking conscience, offered to buy them back at fifteen cents on the dollar, and people stood on one another's shoulders to reach the window of the yamen where they were redeemed.

It was this same ruler, unless I am wronging him, who had a woman thrown off the bridge into the swift river far below and shot by his soldiers. It seems that another of these "spirit women," who pretend to tell fortunes and perform miracles, had once helped one of his concubines to escape with a lover, so that when this one was accused not only of charging too much but of not casting out devils as she had promised—though Heaven knows our own doctors and dentists and lawyers do the same thing—she was condemned to an ignominious death. The soldiers fired six volleys at her in the water, the last one, strangely enough, a hit, and her witchcraft was over. Domestic tragedies were also reputed to be common in Lungchow. A Chinese can legally kill a man caught *flagrante delicto* with his wife, but he must bury the body. There had been such a case here very recently. The outraged husband had tied up his delinquent spouse in a public place and then killed her paramour before her, leaving his body exposed beside her for five days, while young rowdies came at night to light matches and peer in her face. All the town seemed to think such things quite all right, and the very perpetrators of such deeds smiled at one in the most harmless manner in the world. In fact, except in rare aroused moments they are harmless. Foreigners, or Chinese from other parts, who have lived for some time among these people of western Kwangsi say that they have no balance, can never be trusted, that they may be very friendly one moment and fly into a general murderous passion the next. Formerly, the indictment goes on, they were the most harmless of mortals; now it is the ideal of all the young fellows to go out with a gun and get rich, and "they would kill their own fathers for money." Mankind is indeed much alike the world over.

The French were once so sure of getting a railway concession from their Langson branch into Lungchow that they built a big stone station—now the French consulate—and a stone slide not unlike the steeper levees along the Mississippi, down which French goods were to be slid into the boats that were to take them down the river to Nanning. But the Chinese have gradually learned that once any great power gets a foothold in China, however altruistic its intentions may appear

at the time, it is as impossible to eradicate it as to dig up the huge stone footsteps of Buddha miraculously planted in the boulders of her sacred mountains, and the concession was never granted. There used to be another road over into Indo-China, by another suspension-bridge twenty kilometers away across a branch of the upper Si-kiang. We all ran out to it in the commissioner's new Fiat on my last full day in Lungchow, along a cross between a road and a smooth meadow-land, passing close to the foot of several of those mysterious isolated mountains rising out of the plain to wall-girdled summits, and meeting the old Dodge of the military dictator with five of his wives and some of his children returning from a joy-ride to a kind of country-place he maintains there. Under such domestic conditions a motor-car is no mere luxury. But the great floods which often sweep clear over the Lungchow bridge had torn this one aside as a rude hand does a spider-web, and though we could look across to the Tonkinese mountains, like a fantastic black wall with perpetual clouds, we were effectually cut off from crossing the border.

It was my luck to reach Lungchow just a day or two after the departure of the little steamer that came up from Nanning every week or two. Several boatmen promised half-heartedly, and at a price at which one ought to have been able to buy outright the best boat available, to take me down in their sampans—more exactly, *wupuns*, for at least five rather than three boards are needed to make a boat that will stand the strain of this slow, uncomfortable, and uncertain journey, thanks to the bandits along the river, the sand-bars and whirlpools. I decided to set out on foot, only to discover that because of the length of Lungchow's New Year's celebration I could not get a carrier. But the young English-speaking Chinese postmaster prevailed upon one of his mail-carriers, whose official load was light, to carry my simple belongings to Taipingfu, two days below, and we were off. It was magnificent walking, along grassy paths near the river, restful silence amid wild mountain scenery that grew as we advanced, though in places with stony walking. We met a bandit-looking group worthy of Chicago, and I had a sudden vision of trouble. But the fellows dismounted, stood at attention, and took off their caps as I passed! Every little while we met loose-looking characters as well armed as I was weaponless, but they gave me no more trouble than did the tigers, one of which a French priest had recently found eating a coolie in the overland path.

The mail-courier soon picked up another man to do the real carry-



Pastor Liu and his family in his corner of the mission compound of Tungch'uan, whence all foreigners had fled



The difficulties of the "great highway" from Yünnanfu to the Yang Tze are merely suggested by this spot where my carriers just managed to cross a raging mountain stream on the precipitous face of a cliff

the north there is more wheat, *kaoliang*, maize, millet, beans, and sweet potatoes. The Yünnanese dig their potatoes too early, as the Chinese in general pick their fruit, as if they were too hungry to let them mature. Here they were gathering them while still in blossom, washing and peeling them of their thin new skin everywhere, so that the trail through every village was a streak of white potatoes, as the roads of some countries are of oranges. Potatoes grew on every little space between trail and river, on tiny terraces holding half a dozen plants. Then there were patches of pink buckwheat in blossom on the hillsides, plains of oats, white clover, snapdragons, edelweiss, yellow flowers that may have been buttercups, others that looked like but were not daisies, hawthorn- and rose-bushes with plump red berries that would evidently keep us from starvation in an extremity, for old women and children were here and there gathering them, apparently for food.

Having poked all day, my opium-smokers dragged into a miserable village early in the afternoon and tried to get me to stay there. I refused and went on without them, not entirely sure that they would follow. As certainly as you stay with or behind them, your carriers will loaf, and if you send the slowest man on two hours ahead, you will find him waiting half a mile beyond; but few of them dare to stop for the night without overtaking you. As I sat reading just over the next summit, where my horse could graze, and still near enough to the disputed stopping-place so that I could go back to my indispensable baggage at nightfall if necessary, a coolie clad in ragged goatskin scampered past on his way to deliver at a village fifteen *li* ahead the official letter concerning me, which had been brought by another unarmed fellow from Kung-shan; but with him my escort petered out entirely.

The collection of human sties to which I succeeded in dragging the coolies, incongruously called Yei-chu-t'ang, which sounded like the Chinese name for the Catholic Church, was the most miserable of the trip. Here a British missionary had been held up a few months before by the bandits round about, until the governor could send him a huge escort; but thus far we had heard no rumors of bandits, though we passed some ruined villages which they had burned the year before. With the disappearance of escort and government runners, the governor's orders began to be openly disobeyed, and the villagers refused the paper money he had decreed was as valuable as the silver they demanded. I had to sleep in a mud den from

hanging in a single hog-wallow of a street over the edge of the now visibly larger river. A note I carried but could not read made me welcome in the post-office, but that was not much of a place in which to spend a night. Crowds came in to watch me eat what I could fish from my baggage, fingering anything they could get their hands on, and though the postmaster spoke some mandarin he was visibly an inveterate opium-smoker, as were not only a dozen other human wrecks hanging about the mud den where Heung-shui gets its scanty mail, but most of the town who could afford it. My unpleasant host led me into a back room still less palatial and lay down on his wooden bed with its thin dirty reed mat, a folded quilt under his doped head, and took to rolling his smokes, inviting me to share them or at least to look on.

Suddenly I heard singing on the other side of his mud wall, not the saw-filing Chinese noises that pass for music among this enigmatical people, but familiar hymns, though I could not make out the words, and the general effect would not have driven the horseshoe circle at the Metropolitan to burst their gloves with enthusiasm. The opium-smoker murmured, "*Yeh-ssu-t'ang*" (Jesus hall), half confirming a growing suspicion. I strolled nonchalantly outside and slowly up the street, glancing in next door as I passed; to hurry would have been bad Chinese manners. As Shakspeare might have put it, you could have knocked me over with a fly-swatter if there were not three foreigners, two women and a man, to all appearances my own countrymen, standing before the unconsciously disorderly audience that filled, together with rows of wooden benches, a room large for those parts, all doing their worst to perpetuate in the local dialect some of our too well-known Protestant masterpieces. The man gave me the high sign without losing a note, which settled any lingering suspicion that he was British, and motioned to me to enter. My cigar lasted so long that the meeting was breaking up when I accepted the invitation, the crowd gathering about me as if I were an unexpected proof that the world contained other beings of the same general outward appearance as the three strange creatures who had been leading the singing. Or it may be that I was pointed out as the horrible example that illustrated the text or sermon. Heung-shui's other guests were American Baptist missionaries from unfamed towns in the less sophisticated portions of my native land, and they had been in this equally unrenowned hamlet for several days, preparing to bring a dozen of the townsmen to salvation by coaxing them to be immersed in the river below, which to all appearances had never in their lives happened



to any of the population, unless by accident. From that point of view their intentions could do no harm. Accomplish this mission or not, they were going down to Nanning on the steamer I had given up waiting for at Lungchow, and which I had passed that afternoon stuck on a sand-bar. Fortunately they were housed, unless the word sticks in the throat, elsewhere, and being duly invited, I took up my abode among the church benches.

The courier could not get another helper next morning, so that he was as nearly surly as your Chinese coolie gets when I insisted on going on. While I might have waited for the boat, the mixture of Bapticism and Chinese village could easily have proved too much. Taipingfu might be as bad, but I would have a respite during the day's walk.

At Taipingfu the upper Si-kiang comes within a hundred yards of making an island, and a wall with one gate has been thrown across the narrow neck to complete the protection given by the river cliffs. A compact hamlet huddles about this first and principal gate, half a mile from anything except the cattle-grazed graves that take up most of the space within. Until you get to a second, nay, even a third, wall and virtually inside the miserable thing, there is nothing worthy a name on the map to be seen, and even then you have found nothing worth coming to see. Some rowdies disguised as soldiers hung about the gates, though surely there was nothing inside worth protecting.

Luckily Taipingfu has a priest from Brittany, whose church I espied at the inner gate in time to drive the courier toward it. The father was forty-eight years old and had spent exactly half his life in this miserable burg, the only non-Chinese for many miles around, and he did not seem even to mind the strong probability, borne out by his appearance, that he would be there twenty-four more. "Why should I go back to Brittany?" he asked. "All the people I ever knew there are dead or changed or moved away; it would be a very foolish thing to do, saddening rather than pleasant."

He read Chinese classics as easily as American women read novels, and to judge from bits he quoted to me, he evidently got as great pleasure out of them; he had learned to make a rice-wine almost equal to the *vin de messe* sent him through his bishop in Nanning, and he had grown so accustomed to worse native cigars that he found the terrible ones I had bought in Indo-China "*délicieux!*" What more could any reasonable man want? Then there was his garden and his church and

As soon as we decided not to go beyond Lai-t'eo-po that day it stopped raining and the sun came out. I spent the afternoon in a pine-wood up above the town, where life was more pleasant than in these fly-infested villages—flies alone would make it impossible to write more than rough notes on such a journey. It is often said, especially by those who know little about them, that the Chinese know better than we of the West how to live. If by that is meant serenity and taking troubles as they come, there is something in it, though one often wonders if it is not mainly their poker-face ability to keep from showing what is going on behind their placid exteriors. Physically few people know as little how to live as the denizens of these hamlets crowded as closely as possible to the overland trail in two unbroken rows of mud huts, the narrow road the only street, the backs of the mud houses forming the "city wall." The "Christian General" charged the women of Peking with wearing their trousers too short; to steal a *bon mot* from the late Elbert Hubbard, most Chinese women wear them too long, at least four times as long as they should between washings. From end to end of these hamlets there is not a thing that by any stretch of the word could be called clean; nor is scorn of cleanliness confined to the poor and the isolated. I never had the honor of dining or even teaing with the late youthful Emperor of China, but I am ready to wager at least even odds that he was served by dirty-handed eunuchs in dirty-rimmed cups. Unless he has lived abroad it is impossible to give a Chinese a clear idea of what the West means by cleanliness. If you refuse to eat Chinese pork, though fond of the corn-fed kind, your "boy" concludes that you must be some kind of Hwei-hwei, or Mohammedan. If all ancient Asia raised its pigs as the Chinese do, no wonder Moses established a prohibition against pork. Here in Lai-t'eo-po filth and rags were universal, and the discomfort of the mud houses incredible, yet the character for heaven was chalked on the door of many a human sty, and red upright papers of heavenly text plastered the door-posts. No doubt home is heaven no matter how piggy it is. The people were a cheerful, friendly lot, and if they could have been boiled in soap-suds for a week and transported to a clean house their delightful qualities might shine forth undimmed—for the couple of hours before they got just as dirty again.

There was a great climb beyond Lai-t'eo-po, already 8500 feet in the air; but the day was fine after an early shower, which was lucky,

for even in good weather it was too much of a climb for one of my men. Though he had the most decent face among them, he had hard work keeping up, but I knew the uselessness of trying to get any of the others to change loads with him. I never dreamt that he would give up entirely. I had been at the top an hour or more, loafing and reading on a grassy spot in the welcome sunshine, when the other men in passing said he had fallen out. His boxes had all the things of most value in them,—nearly all the rolls of silver as well as my paper money, my passport, letters of credit to firms and missionaries beyond, films and developing-tank, my best clothes—not that that is saying much—in short, without the boxes he carried the trip was impossible.

However, there was nothing to be gained by shivering here on the mountain-top wondering whether he would surmount it; if help must be had it lay beyond. Incidentally it was more pleasant walking than riding up here more than 9000 feet in the air, among driving clouds. The country was stony, with big outcropping rocks down deep gashes of earth with yellow streams at the bottom, though with a reddish appearance of fertility. In some places the road had fallen away to a thread over breakneck abysses, and long rain-slashes across the earth sent the trail steeply down into and out of them. Yet there was considerable bird life, and a boy in tattered goatskins and an equally home-made felt skullcap lay on his belly on a knoll with the great green and wine-colored mountains about him, discoursing really sweet music on a kind of Pan's pipe while he watched a flock of dirty-white sheep mixed with goats that looked on the perpendicular mountain-side like flies on a wall. Then came a descent over sharp rocks, steeper by far than any man-made stairway, down to a sleepy, almost tropical hamlet, where travelers stop for their noonday opium, and such food as they can pay for afterward.

We spent more than two hours there gazing in vain back up the perpendicular, breakneck, cut-foot trail, and still saw no sign of the missing man with the valuable boxes. There was nothing to do but order the other coolies under way and tell Yang to wait and get some one to carry the load when it came. A stout village coolie offered to take the job if it ever appeared, providing I would advance him enough to go home and eat at his mud hut at the end of the hamlet. The five of us went on over a lower range in a pouring rain, followed by a less slippery but more mud-wallowing tramp across a kind of plain into the village of Cheh-chi. There I had to do my own grain-buying,

cooking, and room-making, and see that the horse got water, for the coolies were soon afar away in opium-land.

At the regular-stage stops such as this there were now several great horse-inns, but the up-stairs wooden-floored rooms had ceased with my birthday. Some of the dens I got were still possible, once the mat-and-board "beds" and the sawhorses on which they stood had been thrown out; better than the average in the north. Laden horses and mules came in through the dining-room, which is also the entrance and main family living-room, with hard earth floors in which there was always a big square stone-faced hole for the fire, about which every one sits discoursing much the same wisdom as that heard about the cracker-barrel in our country stores. But Yang could always get hot water, and I took my bath from my own wash-basin while standing astride it in the empty wooden inn tub that saved me from forming a mud-hole in the earth floor of my room. My opium-soaked tramps were sure to be in another pen next to mine, and just beyond another mud-brick partition a man, woman, and child, or two or three girls, perhaps slaves or new daughters-in-law, might be wailing to the ancestors of the next house. The horse's lodging usually cost twenty-five cents, besides food, but mine was only a Yünnan dime, even in a room dismantled for my sole occupancy, with sometimes, as here in Cheh-chi, a babbling stream outside the little wooden-barred window.

When I woke at dawn Yang and the missing boxes were there. He had taken the new coolie back up that breakneck climb and found the carrier entirely given out, the two or three countrymen along the way whom we had offered good wages to go back and "spell him" having in no case kept their promise to do so. Daylight had given out before my man Friday and the new coolie were far beyond the noon-day village, and they had done thirty *li* in the dark and rain over abominable mountain roads filled with rocks, between ten at night and three in the morning. To make matters worse the new coolie turned out to be almost blind, so that he could hardly find the way, and it was lucky our lantern always rode on top of one of the strayed boxes. Yang had caught a heavy cold to add to his lame foot, and had almost lost his voice; but he took it all as part of the day's work and was ready to get breakfast with a smile and be off again at seven for another ninety *li* that once more lasted until dark.

In contrast to Yang the coolies were without exception the worst I ever had on the road in China—though this does not by any means imply that they were worthless. I have never seen men as much

slave to their vice, not even among railroad-construction and fore-castle gangs. The tallest and laziest of them in particular was an exasperating and an amusing study. Slender and delicate of frame, with almost transparent hands, his arms thin and flabby as those of a sickly school-girl, he carried all day long in the mud and rain a load he could hardly lift by hand, but picked his way daintily, in marked contrast to his appearance. He wore night and day two ragged, many patched, long-since-blue garments, with a filthy rag over his head that served also as towel and sweat-cloth. His parasol head-gear looked like an old roof with many shingles and several roof-boards missing, and the rest weather-blackened to decay, for it was years since he had indulged in a new spring hat. The straw sandals he bought now and then along the way at four coppers a pair, and into which he fitted the iron points necessary on so terrible a road, are indispensable to the carrier coolie, or he would not have spent money even for those. With his long ragged gown tucked up behind, his bare legs splashed with mud, his almost white face, his long white fingers tapering down to the overgrown nails of the scholar—though in his case merely because his smoking left him no time to trim them—he looked like an opium-ruined ex-official or some reverted scholar. There was no reason to believe that he, any more than his four companions, knew a single Chinese character, but he did not seem to know his coolie job any too well, and it became a pastime to muse on the possibility that he was a man once of importance now trying to lose himself in order to escape from political enemies, or drown bitter memories in the pipe. With his long hair hanging over his shoulders, because he never found time to braid it into a cue, and his thin but in places long beard, because he never saved money from his perpetual opium debauch to get shaved, he looked, if I may say so without giving offense to the more exacting type of Christian, like Christ in the conventional portraits. But he also, especially when caught off his guard, looked like the devil, and the second look was probably a more exact likeness of his character. I never saw him doing his turn in cooking at the inns, though he always ate with the others who did, and I never knew him not to be the last man in starting and the last to arrive, no matter how dawdling the others might be. Sometimes, in that dreaming nonsense one falls into during the soporific monotony of the road, even while enjoying every moment of the scenery, the thought came to me that perhaps he was the scout of a bandit gang and was holding back so that his fellows could fall in with us in some of these great rocky defiles. In

my fully wakened moments I knew of course that this was nonsense, that he and all the other coolies knew that what I had with me was hardly worth the risk involved in robbing a foreigner, and they could scarcely have taken me for a man wealthy enough to be worth holding for ransom. This chief drag on our progress did not finish the trip with us; at Tungch'uan he exited from the troop after a particularly exasperating trick just in time to leave behind him the imprint of my right shoe, and owing all his companions some of their toil-earned wages.

The three other coolies—the half-blind countryman being a case by himself—were just ordinary bums. The spokesman carrying the mission and lightest load still had manhood enough left to have his hair cut instead of letting it fall in filthy cascades down on his shoulders; but even he was filthy beyond description, and one would not have thought of having any of them within a flea's jump when a box was open, or permit one of them to so much as bring water from the big earthenware jar of it let down into the floor of the inns, even though it was to be boiled before one washed in it. Nor did they seem to make any effort to improve upon this condition, for though they washed their feet every night in a wooden tub of almost boiling water provided by the inns, this seemed rather to be a rite of their calling or a solace to their stone-pounded feet than an act of ablution. Like so many of their profession they got what we might call saddle-sores from the rubbing of the pole across the backs of their necks, until one wondered that their bare shoulders could endure the jolting hundred pounds or more day after day, even though they had probably done nothing else since childhood. All the coolies ate—or mainly smoked—their pay before they earned it, carried absolutely nothing of their own, except a tobacco-pipe and the much more precious opium outfit,—a small tin box holding the lamp, two tiny cups of the half-liquid, amber-brown drug, and the heavy short opium-pipe with a kind of ramrod as pipe-cleaner, all of which, when there was no more chance of prolonging their dissipations, they at length reluctantly put away into dirty bags and tied them on top of my loads, as if having the outfit in plain sight where they could gloat upon it helped to keep them going to the next smoking-place. They carried not a rag to change with those on their backs, depended on the flea-infected straw mats and the worse *pukai*, or ragged quilts, rented at a few coppers at the inns, and on dirty, cracked inn dishes to hold the food they cooked for themselves in the big shallow public kettles set permanently

in the mud-brick stoves of the inns and tea-houses along the way. They never quarreled about the price of opium, but they often did over that of the uncooked food, mainly potatoes, because cheapest at this season, and always seemed to spend even a bit of their hard-earned cash in wayside restaurants with deep regret that it could not all go for the drug they smoked lying on a straw mat on the earth floor within. They seemed even to resent spending money for tea, but unlike most Chinese, even of the coolie class, lay down on their bellies and drank from the reddish streams, though on the whole they did not seem subject to thirst. The Yünnan coolie does not appear to crave liquor or other dissipations besides his opium, though he does use a bit of the mild native tobacco, finely cut as corn-silk and mixed with peanut-oil, in his long-stemmed tiny pipe, without much sign of pleasure, rarely inhaling it. Even the tobacco is not used as the coolie goes, but at halts three or four times a day and before the morning and afternoon starts, when it follows the meal he takes so long to cook and eat after an hour or more has gone to hitting the other pipe, which he can do only lying down, luckily, or he might smoke himself into dreamland while picking his way along the trail.

Every morning as sure as the morning came it took between three and four hours to get the fellows up, their opium smoked, their breakfast cooked and eaten, and their loads adjusted and on their shoulders; and the noonday stop could seldom be cut down to less than two hours—unlike those of Kwangtung the people of Yünnan eat three meals a day, as in the mandarin-speaking north. Every movement they made, whether tying up their bundles or putting away their opium-pipes, was at a two-miles-an-hour gait, except that once well started on the trail they might, if it happened astonishingly to be flat and somewhat smooth for a space, jog at the accepted coolie dog-trot, which he does only on the level and with a load, never when "empty." Neither love nor money would make them hurry or avoid frequent stops, though they would plod on until dark and after, sometimes thirty atrocious miles a day, day after day. With the improvidence of their weakened wills they used up the first part of the day, like their money, on opium, and then had to repay it with high interest in hard travel after dark. But these same wills were so undermined by their vice that, though they were not exactly afraid of the foreigner who showed or feigned anger to get them under way, he could impose his stronger will upon them, and they took refuge in tricks and subterfuges to defend themselves. With such a life before and behind them, one

could hardly blame them for smoking themselves into a happier existence; after all, though they were surly in the morning or when craving a smoke, they had that delightful cheerfulness of the Chinese of the masses under adverse conditions which makes him one of the best road companions on earth. Certainly, watching them carry fully a hundred pounds each for a daily average of twenty-five incredible miles at whatever the *hong*-master had left them of their thirty-three American cents a day, one could hardly accuse them of being lazy.

Breakfast in Cheh-chi over, I took a small lunch and a cup in which to make my own tea and, leaving Yang to coax the baggage along as best he could, I pushed ahead for Tungch'uan, ninety *li* on, the first important town on the route and, most important of all, with an unoccupied foreign house in a mission compound which I had permission to use. That day showed how fast I might have got over the road if, as Kipling's Kim puts it, a *sahib* were not always tied to his baggage.

Most of that day into Tungch'uan was by one of those rock and mud river-bank trails up and down, up and down incessantly, hung precariously through endless green mountains cut up into what look like narrow terraces, which they sometimes were, but more often they are merely the trails made by cattle, sheep, and goats as they wander back and forth across the steep faces of the mountains cropping the thin short grass. A constant drizzle was as uncomfortable as a real rain would have been, and the polished stones of the trail covered with slime were bad enough for my horse and several times worse for the barefooted or straw-sandal-shod coolies. The rain came several times in a mighty downpour, but the worst one found me near enough to a house to drive out the pigs and take my horse inside. The stream we had picked up near the lower summit we had climbed the afternoon before, then no bigger than a water-pipe, but now broad enough to carry flat-bottomed boats, turned westward not far north of Tungch'uan to join the Yang Tze, so that I had already reached the watershed of the great river.

The fast mail on its way back to the capital passed us almost daily, a coolie somewhat above the average in appearance, with two or three characters on his shirt-blouse to show his official standing and a sharp iron lance-head on one end of his carrying-pole, as if he had now and then to protect the eighty pounds of mail he carried fifteen miles day or night at a jog-trot. It was a light load in the Chinese sense that



he would turn over to another postal coolie, who would go on like a relay-racer, all for barely an American five-dollar bill a month. The mail moved so well across this difficult and bandit-ridden part of the country that letters overtook me in almost half the time in which I covered the journey myself at the regular stages of constant all-day travel. Sometimes these efficient postal coolies are robbed, occasionally killed, but they stick to their duty. On the other hand mail-men out here in the west have been known to rent out the oil-cloth issued them to keep the letters dry. Long trains of pack-animals carried second-class matter. China had until the end of the last century only private mail systems, very fast and often in charge of foreigners even then. Officials had horse relays and swift coolie relays that moved with surprising speed, and between important ports along the coast the customs service maintained a postal service, with a different stamp for each port, while coasting vessels carried letters free in order to help trade.

The woman in a combination of stable and tea-house who acted as noonday hostess to my horse, and to myself to the extent of boiling water and letting me occupy a table and sawhorse out on the mud porch overlooking the trail, was a merry soul in spite of a raggedness and an immundicity beyond anything the mere Westerner can picture. She was in no way conspicuous for that, however, for such is the condition of almost every one on this great Yünnan trail, the clothing along which almost never had a whole six-inch piece, but was patched like a quilt made of cloth that had been run through a shredder. Nothing is ever wasted in China, so I had been surprised to find that no final use seemed to have been found for worn-out *tsao-hai*, the abandoned straw sandals one sees every yard or so along any well-traveled trail of southern China, going back again into the earth from which they came, like the worst and best of us; but here they were picked up and hung out to dry, evidently to be used as fuel. There were special *tsao-hai*, when the mud did not make the wooden clog-troughs necessary, for the bound feet that were universal, since women not only walked some distances but even carried loads. Even the beggar women along the most unlikely parts of the trail had bound feet. If they hardly had a rag to tie about their bodies, they all had found something with which to bind their feet, with the bright red of the Yünnan hat-band to wrap about their atrophied calves. There were the most horrible sights in the most incredible rags, some with a professional air about them, however, and the beggars by vocation

of Tungch'uan managed somehow to look more ragged and miserable than the ordinary people along the way. Man is sometimes the vilest animal of the lot; pigs, chickens, even scavenging curs are not so dirty as many Chinese human beings let themselves get, and they certainly do not deliberately cripple or mutilate their female young.

Nearing Tungch'uan, where the river turns westward to join the great Son of the Sea, there was a steep short climb over a rocky spur that neither I nor the horse, which had thrown a shoe that morning and could not be ridden in stony places, could get up without sliding back like the famous frog climbing out of the well, often on our hands and knees, splashing even my face with mud. The sun had come out brilliantly after the last hard downpour, and from the stony summit a very rich rice-valley opened out among the semi-arid yellow, stony, though still cultivated hills, among which the town was out of sight around a curve to the right.

The mud of a broader road-level made poor walking in garments chosen for higher altitudes, but was soft enough for me to mount the horse again without hurting his unshod foot. He had hardly earned his rice, or whatever substitute therefor we had been able to buy for him along the way, often at famine prices, and I decided it was high time he did something for his keep. But you can never be sure of the real character of man, woman, or beast. No more docile animal ever existed than this tall gelding which the natives along the way were always edging away from and calling in astonished voices "*ta ma*," and it was with the utmost astonishment that, upon stepping forward to mount him I found mutiny on my hands, for he jogged just beyond my reach. The rubber poncho, the South-American llama-hair one needed on cold heights, the heavy cavalry rain-coat, all fell off the saddle on which I had lightly tied them, as he jogged harder and harder along, so that I had to pick these up and jog after him. A mile or two of this left me reeking in mud and perspiration and with a notion that the joke had gone far enough. I dashed up to the animal quickly to catch the reins or pommel. But he took up the jog again just before I laid hand on the saddle, and as I had long considered him harmless as a sheep, I caught his tail, which I had handled freely many times before. My own son suddenly turning bond salesman would not surprise me more than the vicious, two-legged, whole-hind-ended kick which that rangy gray gelding launched out at me. The two hoofs actually grazed my ears, smearing my face and all my front with mud, and if I had not been born a lucky man or the

gelding had not been so perfect in his perhaps intentionally innocuous aim, I should certainly have been very badly in need of the services of a dentist, if not of his more general colleague, in a place where neither of them flourishes. Within a mile I caught and mounted the beast without the tail-grip, partly by ruse and partly by running so fast that he probably said to himself, "Oh, what's the use? I might better carry this fellow than have to keep up this pace"; and I have seldom had a better proof of the perfection of my character and my truly Chinese ability to show no signs of anger under great provocation than the fact that I merely rode the creature on into Tungch'uan without brain- ing or even beating him.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### TOILSOME TRAILS OF THE SOUTHWEST

**T**HE main trail north and south goes through Tungch'uan from west to east, so that I rode in through the usual large suburb about the West Gate, as through that outside the East Gate in leaving, before I got into the city itself. The governor's birthplace proved to be a small, compact, perfectly rectangular town of many fine trees within a good old wall, with a graveyard backed by a temple-crowned hill, stone tombs climbing far up the sides of the mountains close on the south that had forced us to come in from the west. They were high, plump mountains, their slopes a more or less velvety deep green in this rainy season, but still with bare reddish patches, rising all about a place already 7250 feet above sea-level, according to several amateur owners of aneroids and barometers who have passed there. The city wall, of stone and in recent repair, was about half a mile long and a quarter wide, with a fine grassy walk around the top, as usual the only good one in town, from which one looked across a great rice-plain stretching to mountains with many villages along their skirts, and marveled to realize that all over the Orient every blade of rice is set out by hand. There were the usual mud-brick houses, with dull tile roofs, almost so compact as to hide the miserably narrow cobbled streets running among them, and a number of picturesque old temples, especially handsome for their fine old trees and mountain background, overrun with soldiers, like so many of the best temples of southern China.

Having lost two days from the regular road schedule between Yünnanfu and Tungch'uan, I was for pushing on again at once next morning. But I had found a delightful mission compound up in the northeast corner of the city wall, with many flowers and plenty of long grass for my horse, not to mention a fully furnished, half-foreign house of two stories that had not been occupied for some months because the government did not consider it safe for foreigners to live so far inland in these troubled times. A Chinese pastor, who as a boy had gone to the mission school with his then equally unimportant

townsman, now governor, had received word to make me welcome. He and his large family lived in a less foreign house through a full-moon gate in the farther part of the compound, and as he spoke the first English I had heard except from my own lips since walking out of Yünnanfu nine days before, I was tempted to stay two nights and rest up, even though I had really had no hardships at all along the way, when I compared the comfort of my Chinese travel with that down the Andes a decade before. Moreover, the horse was so sore-footed from having lost a shoe and a half on the very stony road of the last two days that, though I got him shod again at once as soon as I reached town, he badly needed a day's rest. When Yang arrived soon after dark with the coolies he was plainly weary as well as half voiceless, and the coolies were frankly tired; besides, we had to find another to take the place of the one who had fallen out, since the half-blind countryman could go no further. I had films that needed developing, and furthermore, when I came to remember, it was the third evening of July. I decided to spend the great and glorious Fourth there, even though it was in a house lent me by one of the nation to the discredit of which we celebrate that glorious day. At least it would be a good joke on the Englishman—though I believe he happened to be Welsh. I celebrated the day as the only foreigner, not merely to say American, for hundreds of miles in any direction, thinking of that other celebration with ice and perhaps—or ought I to say this?—even with champagne back in Yünnanfu, while here there was not even an American flag in town, though one's life had depended on producing one, not a fire-cracker to wake me early, not a stick of chewing-gum—though there were some peanuts, and I heard later that the tribes-people not far away use popcorn.

I told Yang that this was a big American day and he should make a dinner accordingly, and while he was "buying things" I developed films and made sure that the horse also had fare worthy of the day. I ate some of the best and heaviest canned things in my loads, lightening them in consequence, so that even the coolies gained by the celebration, and when I was at length ready and fit to leave the pleasant compound, the pastor insisted on piloting me about town. We went first of all to the local branch of the Fu-tien Bank and asked the manager to bear out the promise of the bit of its paper I still had to pay me thirty dollars on sight. It took some time and pastoral diplomacy to get us in, but luckily foreigners are rare. The bankers first tried to beat me down to twenty dollars, but we got them to change

it all, since I wanted to get this falling paper off my hands, even my coolies having refused it. Here, being far enough from the capital not greatly to fear the edicts of the son of Tungch'uan who had become boss of the province, the people accepted his paper money only at eighty cents to the dollar. The Chinese are not stern in most matters, and the manager of the bank evidently saw nothing wrong in his chief clerk's doing business from his seat-divan-alcove-bed or lounging-place, with an expensive opium outfit beside his desk, so that he could lie down and smoke between transactions. The post-office could not even change a Yünnan dime, and squeezed ten or twenty "cash" when another customer made it possible. A telegram back to the capital was not expensive, since the rates were the same in Yünnan money as in "Mex," and as a government enterprise they were forced to accept paper.

Perhaps the chief industry of Tungch'uan is the making of felt rugs, in the large rug-making suburb out of the West Gate. We had met many loads of these blood-red rugs sent in great batches to the capital. They are not woven but are made by chopping up sheep's wool and pounding and rolling it, almost exactly like the *yourts* of the Mongols, though here men rather than women do the work, and instead of laying it out on the bare Gobi they do so inside their mud houses, the back ones very crowded with the stock ready to be shipped out. The pattern—flowers, figures, and so on—is put on in flour paste, and the rug is hung out in the sun to dry, then boiled in dye in big shallow kettles, so that the color takes only on the unexposed parts, the paste protecting the pattern. Small roots from along a river in a hot place one day west of the town gave the bright red color, said never to fade. The narrow dirty streets of a large part of the west suburb were gay with rugs hung out before most of the houses, some only in paste, some already in color. The best rug I saw sold for hardly three dollars gold—and a muleteer taking a load there offered to deliver it in Yünnanfu, and did so, for the equivalent of a dime.

Another important industry of Tungch'uan is the making of copper kettles, which are first beaten roughly into the shape desired out of copper brought from a mine three days away to the west, and smelted with stony coal, carried an equal distance from the east, in a Japanese-built smelting-place with an incongruous gray six-sided chimney just outside the east gate. In many streets of the east suburb, men and older boys beat out wash-basins, bowls, spoons, and a score of other things, on a kind of baby anvil stuck in the ground inside the hut or



The coal-mines outside Chaot'ung are so shallow that only boys can carry out the coal in this four-legged manner



I felt no unbearable longing to carry far the heaviest of my coolie-loads on my soldier-protected journey across Yunnan



Only once in more than a week did the laborious trail leave the roaring river, to climb a steep mountain spur and, passing beneath this tree, plunge instantly down to it again



This boy of eight under fifty pounds of rock-salt and keeping pace with his equally overlaid father for long day after day of abominable mountain trails suggested how the *bay-fu* of southwestern China are trained



before the door, after which they are turned on crude but effective foot-lathes, run even by women in spite of their bound feet. Here among pigs and chickens, the man or woman peddles industriously up and down from dawn until pitch-dark, the brass artisan of Tungch'uan finishing and polishing his solid brass or copper vessels with deft fingers that show generations of experience.

The pastor thought there was little danger of bandits on the five days between Tungch'uan and Chaot'ung, since thirty had been killed not long before, and a big caravan with many soldiers was scheduled to go the next day. But he thought that even if I had been furnished no escort for the last three stages, I should send my card to the magistrate and tell him I was off in the morning. Accordingly Yang was despatched in his best clothes, and came back to announce that due note had been taken of my honorable presence—which of course had been unofficially known within an hour of my arrival—and early next morning four soldiers turned up.

This time they were all young fellows who looked as if they might have been of some little service in a fight, but not so much could be said for their weapons. One had a gun tied up with paper—string being a rare and precious thing in interior China—and before long he found that the trigger had dropped out. Still he might have thrown the gun at the bandits in case of attack. The other weapons looked like rattling scrap-iron of the vintage of about 1880, and only one of the men seemed reliable enough to have been intrusted with cartridges. Before we had gone far another borrowed a piece of string from me to tie his gun together. But they were very cheerful, boyish, playful, and, still more unlike the coolies, a bit inclined to be "fresh." As they surrounded me like so many nurse-girls, my four protectors might easily have been mistaken for bandits that had captured me, but they did not happen to be on that side just then. The corporal, or at least the spokesman of the squad, wore a round cap of white felt like the rugs of Tungch'uan that was in keeping with his Mohammedan features. Though their dialect was not so easy as Yang's good mandarin, the soldiers talked with me to some advantage. They said they enlisted for as long as it pleases them to remain soldiers—and that they got \$4.20 Yünnan a month, barely a nickel a day—if, when, and as issued—and even then it was of course in paper, though they have at least a muzzle-loading means of forcing its acceptance. They also get their cotton uniforms, caps with the red bands of Yünnan, and

food; especially food, for that is the great incentive. Naturally my twenty-five cents each, at least eight cents in our money, for a day's tramp of twenty-seven miles over the mountains and back home again next day, was gratefully received. They seemed to see little of the irony of life, and to be merry and happy without a thought of wanting to cut the throat of the general who hogged all the taxes of their district. Until they and their kind do want to, the present parody on government in China will probably go right on—and when they do, perhaps things will be worse than ever.

The sun was too high for the ninety-*li* day before us when we jogged, again ten men and a horse besides myself, out through the east gate and the suburb of copper-makers beyond and struck off to the left across a broad rice-plain by paddy-dikes, then up over a high rocky hill. On the glaring face of this a family fell in and traveled more or less with us for a day or two, glad to take advantage of my escort. There was an ugly woman with tiny red-bound feet, on a bony mare, with a hungry colt following and trying in vain to call frequent halts for liquid refreshments. The man of the family walked, with all their belongings in a basket on his shoulders like a knapsack, a form of conveyance not common in the rest of China. A boy of about five walked most of the time, but sometimes rode on the bony mare in front of his mother, who once or twice got off and hobbled on her crippled feet. A boy of ten carried papoose-fashion in a kind of basket a fat and heavy two-year-old all day long in hot sunshine over rocky mountain roads except that two or three times the woman took the child up on the horse with her to suckle it. Yet there was never a peep out of any of the party all day long, though the baby's feet must have been asleep, and its head hanging back under a ragged umbrella that did not always keep off the sun rolled back and forth as it tried to doze; and the boys and the mother at least must have been foot-sore, while the bony mare and even the colt had good reason to complain. At noon on that first day out of Tungch'uan, I saw a woman with natural feet, long trousers, and a black cloth about her head like a cross between a turban and the black head-band of an Annamese man, and this promise of more tribespeople to come from then on was duly kept, for there are many of them off the main trail.

About Tungch'uan there had been some tobacco growing, but there were no signs of the poppy, at least in this season. Up among the hills again the main crop was Indian corn. While a father plowed his rather barren hillside, the son strewed in the furrows the fertilizer

he had spent months gathering behind passing animals along the overland trail. Some of the hillsides were great gashed slopes of almost blood-red soil, so steep that the rain would wash out any planting. The mountains were like frozen distance, many red and old-wine in color, washed bare of even the grass patches which grew elsewhere, small scrub evergreens the only vegetation. The trail was constantly crumbling away, like the one I had followed a year and a half before to Lanchow, though here there was no loess. Two or three mud huts scattered over the vast landscape were often the only signs of life except on the trail. We went sleepily down to a red river, actually with a stone bridge, its wooden railing between huge stone posts long since disappeared; then we climbed for hours stiffly up to the same height again, and stopped that night at Hong-shih-ai (Red Stone Cliff) in the worst inn of the trip.

On Sunday it rained now and then, and all day long we went up and down over mountain trails in sandy soil mainly dry, and with far-reaching views. Toward noon rumors of robbers began to float to our ears from travelers we met along the way, and my soldiers showed me a litter of boxes opened by bandits among the evergreen trees on the bare red ground beside the trail. It had happened just two or three hours ahead of us. The men eating in the mud village just beyond said there had indeed been robbers, that so and so, pointing to this man and that, had been robbed; but they seemed to take it much as they did the rain, something that cannot be helped, so why make any fuss about it? As nearly as I could gather, the robbers had not been armed with anything more terrible than sticks cut from the evergreen shrubs that surrounded us thinly all that day, with which they had beaten the owners of the boxes; they may have been amateurs, who probably would not have run the risk of attacking a foreigner even if I had not been "protected" by the four boy soldiers, who, to give them credit, did keep more closely around me during the afternoon.

Farther on another and more serious tale of banditry reached us: three mule-loads of opium and one of silver had been taken while the drivers slept at the village where we must spend the night. Unless they needed a foreigner as a pawn in negotiations with the so-called government, it was not likely real bandits would take my few things, for they prefer big shipments of opium, silk, or silver; but the constant rumors imbued with interest many a thing that turned out to be merely a wind-waved bush. Even with soldiers one was never sure whether those higher up were not secretly on the side of the bandits, for guns

and munitions are often furnished the bandits by high officials, either in return for safety when they or their goods pass along the big roads, or for various favors from the bandits, including, scandal has it, commissions on their takings. But there is a saying in China that "one piecie man" can usually get through, and probably my inability to have adventures in scores of places, where other people had them just before or after me, was due to my insignificant oneness.

That afternoon we went down by stone village after village like so many steps from the fine rolling mountain-tops into a long though not very wide plain, with many hamlets that tilled the fields huddled up on the stony flanks of the foot-hills bounding it, so as to keep all the arable land for rice. Here the going was soft and consequently much worse than up on the mountain, where the sun soon dried out the rain-soaked earth. Sunset found us entering still another miserable village, called I-ch'ai-hsuin, as nearly as our poor letters will give it, only to find it overflowing with the Yünnanfu-to-Chengtü caravan with which we had once before collided.

As there was no inn room, I put up, appropriately for Sunday night, at a temple in the main street. There is seldom objection to this if you pay at least as much as you do at an inn. A girl at the high steps and door to the compound did protest a bit as I rode up them into the little temple court with a huge bronze bell in the center as a flower-pot, probably fearing we would not pay the customary ten cents for our lodging, but Yang soon convinced her that "foreigners are always honest and pay well," which was one of his favorite lines. I tied the horse under the porch to one of the big wooden pillars, and put all my belongings in the temple itself, its high heavy doors wide open. It was a big room for one man, the usual noises and crowds of curious were easily shooed out by Yang, and on the whole I was so well pleased that I had Yang buy a second feed of pork for the coolies. The room had an irregular floor of black earth with a lot of little old unpainted tables of various heights scattered about, also several black coffins, which Yang assured me were only kept for use in case of deaths, though I had always heard that they were full of corpses waiting propitious time for burial. At any rate they did not smell, and I do not think I am superstitious, though they say every one is. I put up my cot and mosquito-net before a self-selected audience of small boys and a few men, though nothing like the mob that would have surrounded me at an inn, and used for writing and supper a table right before the altar. There was, too, something no Chinese inn

ever has, an arm-chair, meant perhaps for the priest or god or ancestor or something. I had a feeling that if a wandering Chinese in the United States, finding no hotel, put up in a church without asking any one but the janitor's small daughter, there might be objection—certainly there would be if he took a sponge-bath on the floor in his wash-basin. But in that case it would not have been an earth floor, nor would everything have been so lacking in housekeeping that one could hardly have done any damage if one had tried. There were no roosters under a stone in the floor as there had been at the inn the night before, no coolies in the next room smoking opium until I was half under its influence myself, no noise of any kind nearer than the sort of lodge where the doorkeeper's family lived and where Yang did his cooking.

Monday, which looked on the map like an easy day of only seventy-five *li* from I-ch'ai-hsuin to Chiang Ti, proved to be the hardest day of the overland journey, if not indeed the hardest day of travel I ever saw in China. I thought the road and the weather had already done their worst, but it rained almost all day, now in downpours, less often a mere drizzle, though the morning was clear and the noonday hot. The trail was from the very edge of the town an unbroken succession of rocks and stones, long ago thrown together into what the Chinese mistake for a road, and with mud between them in which my horse slipped and stumbled, and my coolies did far worse. To say that the "road" was belly-deep in liquid mud is to give only a hint of how indescribably atrocious it was. To make matters worse, we ran into and soon became inextricably tangled up for all the rest of the trip to Chaot'ung with the caravan of about two thousand pack-animals and horses, mainly loaded with opium, with chair-borne officials, merchants, families, and the like without end. It was like the exodus of the Bible. The mules were a bit faster and surer-footed in this going than my coolies, and so the coolies had to drop back and could not or would not get by them, though I managed to pass a good many myself, and so I had to let them all go by again before my lunch caught up with me. All morning we struggled along a small river by a mud trail beyond description, all the afternoon high above a smaller stream coming down through a great gorge, too narrow to pass any one struggling from the opposite direction, of whom luckily there were few, and with a thousand places to go sliding to destruction, as at least one mule and two horses did.

For some time a part of the caravan had been coming back, but I thought it was because they could find no lodgings in the town. I struggled past them, and at last to my great relief, since it would have been a sad night indeed out here on the road, I sighted, far down below, Chiang Ti, with its curious suspension-bridge over a roaring tributary of the Yang Tze. The town, I knew, though so picturesquely piled up on the north bank of the stream, would not be so beautiful as it looked at a distance. Nor did I find it as easy as it looked to get down into it. For the small stream in the gorge we had been following all the afternoon, though it looked placid from aloft, had risen to a red river foaming down over great boulders. The rain had turned it to a torrent, though it is often bone-dry. I did not propose to spend the night here, with the town so near, and I thought I had seen some pack-animals not so large as my horse cross as I came down the hill. So, though some other drivers stopped at the place the trail crosses the gorge, I took out of my saddle-bags such things as water would hurt and gave the horse a whack to drive him in, then jumped up and sprang along the huge boulders on which one can cross rather easily on foot. When I got to the further side of the first rock and looked to see how the horse was getting on, there was no horse to be seen! Above the roaring of the waters I dully heard shrieking, and dashing over another great boulder and catching sight of some gesticulating coolies on the rain-dimmed shore, I looked down where they were pointing and my horrified eyes saw a gray horse, or rather only the frightened head thereof, going round and round in a whirlpool four or five great rock falls below.

It was good-by of course to about a hundred Yünnan dollars worth of horse, saddle, and bridle, not to mention other odds and ends, and there were weary days of walking ahead of me, but the saddest of all was the scared head of the poor horse. There was nothing to do about it, for the gorge, a few yards farther down, dropped into the raging Niu-lan-kiang, racing away to the Yang Tze not far off to the west, which in due time would no doubt bring the horse and saddle, or remnants thereof, down to Shanghai.

But strange as it may sound, the horse got caught in a corner of the rocks far down below, and as in China there are always men on hand to do anything, and the rule not to oppose the evil spirits that obviously want a person that is drowning evidently not applying to a horse, two coolies sprang down to his assistance and amid many shrieks and much vocal advice from both shores they got his front

toes on a rock, to which he clung like grim death. The men tore his saddle off and just managed to drag him out, and he promptly began eating grass, even before he had climbed to the trail again. His nerves seemed shaken, however, and for days he would not cross the slightest trickle of water without protest. The coolies promptly got a silver half-dollar each, a whole day's hard-labor wages in those parts, and went off more contentedly than I did with a water-soaked, trebly heavy saddle and a useless horse. Yang and the coolies were far behind, but of course they heard of the feat from coolies along the road, so that they arrived so agog with my extraordinary fortune that they half forgot the terrible going of the day. Do not conclude that it was not a tragedy after all, however, for when I got time and calmness enough to take stock, I found that two straps at the rear of the saddle had given away and that a coat of which I had deprived some black Savannah Beau Brummel by buying it there five years before, was gone, not to mention my army leggings. The worst of it was that I had been sternly ordered by my wife to get rid of it before I came back again, and she might think I had obeyed her. But I comforted myself with the thought that I might some day run across it on the back of a coolie, or even on that of some dark beachcomber in Shanghai whose complexion it better suited and who might conceivably carry it back to Savannah where it belonged.

The worst day of the trip was followed by what was perhaps the worst night. It was dark when I got down to the suspension-bridge, far-famed among travelers in southwest China, across the Niu-lan-kiang, a red flood far beneath, roaring on its way to the Yang Tze like some fierce being long shut up and at last released. The cables, made of iron rods three inches in diameter linked in the general form of a chain, are good examples of the cables of medieval days. The boards were thin and worn, and the bridge rocks so much that only three mules at a time are allowed on it. The artist had left no possible doubt about the respective sexes of the two stone monkeys guarding the southern entrance to the bridge-side; across the stream was a stone tiger with tail rampant, and opposite him some mythological being faintly resembling a lion on a spree.

The one-street town beyond was crowded with that part of the caravan which had crossed the gorge before the waters rose, and others strayed in during the night, having gone miles back to a bridge and come in by another mountain path. The only place I could get into

was a "horse inn" where I waded in filth to tie mine to one of the long mangers, and I had to see to it that the hay furnished as a part of the lodging was not stolen by other animals or their drivers. Usually we had a place to ourselves and bought *chin-tsao* or *lii-tsao* (new or green hay) with corn, beans, or once in a while rice, by the *shen*, which means measure and nothing more and which differed completely in size at every town; and as grain was at what the Chinese consider famine prices, the horse often cost me more than did Yang. Weights and measures, like money, are never the same in two places in China, rarely the same at two different times in the same place. By the time I had the soaked saddle and blankets in a safe place it was late, and Yang and the coolies began straggling in, smeared with mud, evidently more tired than I was. The only lodging even Yang's insistence on my importance produced was in a kind of granary over this great stable, after a half-naked and probably diseased youngster, with the filthy *pukai* he had been sleeping in, had been driven out by his father, who wanted the money.

With a cot and a mosquito-net and a good cook one's troubles are never very great, though the promise to let me have the room to myself was not true as I understood that promise, even if it was true that no one else was allowed to sleep in it. Nor for that matter was I, for the boxes containing grain were always being visited, and coolies found various other excuses for coming in, and all night long there was yelling of the men who attended to the horses, some of them evidently stable employees and others the drivers themselves, so that I woke at dawn somewhat rested but no less sleepy.

The hill that begins immediately at the end of the mud-oozing single street of Chiang Ti climbs sharply without respite for a full twenty-five *li*. Whereas the town down in the gorge of the roaring Niu-lan-kiang, in which all travelers over this route halt, is only 4400 feet above sea-level and often miserably hot and breathless, Ta Shui Ching, where those bound north stop for the next midday refreshments, is at 9300 again. My coolies as usual were as late as possible in getting their smoking and eating and load-adjusting done—bathing, shaving, and dressing at least were eliminated—so that the entire caravan got off before us and the town was empty and almost quiet, with only its few regular inhabitants, mainly pigs and cur scavengers wallowing about in the churned-up mud, awaiting another such visitation on which the town mainly lives.

The caravan stretched in endless zigzag up the mountain-side, turn-





A Miao carrier with the indispensable portion of my kit made half the speed of Chinese coolies under twice the load



While baby sleeps the unspoiled tac Miao mother watches the missionary-sponsored games in the field below



In her festival dress, porcupine-quills, elaborate silver ear-rings and all the rest, the "flowery Miao" maiden is indeed worthy the name



The Miao baby goes to market or to a festival in a felt bed on mother's back, undismayed by the maternal hair-dress

ing back down the tributary it had come up to cross at the bridge, so that we were almost opposite the scene of the drowning of my gelding when the real climb began, and looked with a reminiscent and not entirely pleased eye upon the place, now almost bone-dry again. In return for the foolishness of causing the mishap, and in order to give the animal's shattered nerves time to recover, I walked all morning, enjoying every step to the top of the hill, and managing to scramble past almost the whole caravan on the way. It was a brilliant day again, and I could look back over all the country we had covered from Tungch'uan. The mud in places on that constant zigzag up the mountain-side was so deep that both men and horses were often up to their knees, and here and there the drivers were shoveling a place for their animals to get through, in fact digging some of them out. In one place I saw a man actually engaged in mending a bit of impassable road by piling up mud and cutting down the bank back to which the rains had washed the former trail—a basket for "cash" and coppers beside him as a hint to those who used the road to remember what they owed him.

The great caravan to Chengtu took normally from four to five hours, sometimes a part of two days, to pass a given point, for while it made good speed considering its size, it hardly moved swiftly. There were hundreds of loads of opium in well-made flat boxes that fitted on the sides of the mules, stout and in general appearance very good animals. Most of these loads and those said to contain money in specie of Yünnan had government flags or red pompons sticking out at an angle above the animal's shoulders to indicate that they were under special protection, and one could also usually tell the valuable loads by the way the soldiers clustered about them like flies about honey. In many cases the drivers also carried loads on their backs, after the Chinese way of getting as much done at a time as possible.

Most of the caravan lay zigzagged down the hill below me when I reached the summit, where I could mount with a clear conscience and ride on over an undulating trail with vast views on both sides. By noon-time the mountain-sides were covered with mules and horses with their packs off and their nose-bags on, since the grass to be eaten on the ground was almost nil. The animal without at least four big raw sores on the usually saddled part of the back was virtually unknown. In places the packs were piled score upon score in the "road" with the familiar Chinese indifference to the convenience of others, so that it was almost impossible to pass. Seeing one of these great caravans

spread out on a mountain slope, the mystery was greater than ever where it managed to stow itself in one of these small filthy towns at night. Here and there two men, or even three, were shoeing a horse or a mule; on such a road the stones often pull the shoes off or break them, yet the animal that goes half a day unshod is sure to be lame. Any one seems to consider himself capable of shoeing a horse, and the hoofs of the animals look it. Though there were some horseshoers in the hamlets along the way, they did not have shoes and nails; we had to carry two shoes for each foot and some nails from the larger towns where they could be purchased. The shoes were crudely forged things, as were also the nails, made entirely by hand on rough anvils, such nails as we used in America before the Civil War. The shoe was not even heated to shape it to the foot of the animal, but might be pounded cold and then nailed on as best the poor workman could with his worse tools, the ends of the nails twisted off and left unrasped or untended, so that the animal either soon pulled the shoe off again or cut its ankles with the sharp ends, or both. The one thing that could be said of the horseshoeing was that it was cheap per shoe and per job, but a real shoeing at American prices would probably have been cheaper in the long run.

I reached the summit-and-lunch-place town of Big Water Spring while the first of the caravan were finishing their midday meal, and so far ahead of my carriers that I sat more than two hours reading in the brilliant sunshine before the first of them, luckily the man with the "kitchen" and the things we used at every meal, finally dragged up and set his load down heavily, to lie down at once on a ragged reed mat on the mud floor of a mud hut and lose himself in the joys of opium. There was no place to sit that was not filthy, of course, except on one of the sawhorses six to eight inches wide which the Chinese consider a comfortable seat, but I had found by experience how to make these fairly usable, merely putting one or two endwise against a wall and sitting on them with my back to it.

The descent from Ta Shui Ching had fine views on all sides and was by no means so swift as the ascent, so that it made a good ride with frequent spells of walking, though in places it was swift enough, with the lack of stones and the recent rains, to be slippery for both man and beast. One boy soldier of the twenty who overtook me at noon and said they had been sent to escort me slipped on the mud in one fairly steep place and flung his rifle several yards behind him as he simultaneously sat down with decided emphasis and skated an equal

distance in the opposite direction. Under such circumstances the Chinese can be almost as forceful in expressing their opinion of the world at large and humanity in general as can our own truck-drivers, but they are naturally so good-natured, or so quick to enjoy a joke on themselves, that by the time he had connected again with his errant weapon the whole twenty were as boyish in their play spirits as ever. They were not even greatly saddened by my refusal to pay the usual fee for protection, for they had not overtaken me until one in the afternoon, and had not been visibly with me anyway, as my things had been mixed up in a great caravan with scores of soldiers guarding it, even if, as I strongly suspected, they were merely a score of the regular caravan guard who thought they could get a tip out of me at the end of the day by pretending they were protecting me exclusively. I felt surer of this when, after sticking about me for an hour or two down the hill, they gradually, as Yang convinced them that these strange beings from over the sea usually meant what they said, drifted back to the general caravan.

Along the way I passed broken-down coolies limping homeward like cast-off members of their rival packhorses, skeletons of which lay here and there, all dragging their precious carrying-poles along with them. Unlike the four-footed animals, they were left to forage for themselves, and no one, apparently not even themselves, much cared whether they lived or died. Thin normally, they were often mere skin and bones, crawling along at hardly a mile an hour, yet somehow more or less keeping up with us, perhaps by going all night. Some had terrible sores on their legs, because of a bursting out of a great mass of the varicose veins which they almost all have; and many had shoulder-sores almost as bad as the horses. No wonder a mere horse with a sore back excites no pity. Though I now and then instructed Yang to spend a Yünnan dime for a dinner for some of the plainly deserving ones, it always occasioned great surprise, and their fellow-coolies or even the rich merchants carried in chairs did not give them anything, unless it was something they must have thrown away anyhow; and this seems to have been the rule in China for so long that they did not show the least surprise or resentment. One man that I saw for weeks on this overland trip—for my stops and side trips seemed just enough to keep him making about the same speed that I did—was an albino coolie, with snow-white hair and rabbit-pink eyes that could hardly see even on the dullest day, limping northward with his useless carrying-pole over a battered shoul-

der, his hands, and sometimes his face, bloody from what seemed to be falls on the terrible trail when the sunshine made it impossible for him to make out the road.

That night the miserable Mohammedan hamlet of Tao Uen was so packed with caravan that all I could get, short of demanding aid from the magistrate, was a poor pigsty with a wall of unbaked mud bricks ready at any time to fall down upon me, horses eating all about me except where some soldiers were smoking opium and playing mah-jongg. In the morning the caravan split on either side of a lake-swamp where flat-bottomed boats with a draft of hardly two inches poled many foot-travelers and bundles for miles until a low stone bridge forced them to take to their feet again. But neither I, on horseback, nor the great pack-train with which I had been mixed up for days could make use of the little boats; having got up at dawn and pushed on by myself, with orders to Yang to see that the coolies finished their job by nightfall, I jogged steadily along over a road that was at least level even if still not much else. Paddy-dikes took other strings of *t'iao-fu* and pedestrians, but there seemed just as many packhorses to pass in that one of the two lines which I followed, sometimes a mile apart, both lines reflected in the lake-stream hazily like a Corot painting, the two lines stretching to infinity before and behind. I had been forced to let most of these early risers get the start on me again, so that I had the job of passing them, as the day before. The chief danger was to the knees in bumping them against the hard packs, for in coming upon them from behind one could not flourish the hardy horse or mule out of the way as in meeting them, and they have gone the trails all their lives and are not easily imposed upon. Now and then I fell off the narrow trail entirely, as a packhorse suddenly dashed against me. But it was nothing like the rainy days in the mountains.

Toward noon, something less than a short half-day out of Chao-t'ung, where its great plain begins, wheel-tracks began to appear, and I soon saw a few water-buffalo carts, with solid wheels more or less circular, the first wheeled thing since leaving the railway at Yünnanfu; for a long time even water-buffaloes, disliking the high altitudes, had been rare or unknown. Down on the rich Chao-t'ung plain there was some wheat standing in small bundles of heads before huts, and threshed as rice is in China and Japan, by beating the heads off into something. I passed through the *p'ai-lou*, or memorial arch, of the Li family of

Chaot'ung, one of the finest in Yünnan and rivaling those of Szechuan, famous for its stone arches—one of the most artistic I ever saw in China, for though the Chinese are not much on road-building, they can straddle their abominable trails with costly memorial arches, ancient or new, often artistic, and frequently made of pure white marble. Later I learned that the ancestral hall of this family was about the only thing of interest in the city, only two hundred years old. The distance from Tao Uen was reputed to be sixty *li*, and I had grown so accustomed to waiting for my carriers that I astonished myself by passing the whole caravan and riding into the compound of the British mission out on the hillside nearly half a mile beyond the walled city of Chaot'ung, the great half-way station on the overland trail to the Yang Tze, by eleven in the morning, the only unpleasant thing being that one of my two soldiers insisted on doing his best to keep up with me, with the result that he ran and sweat under his rifle as I have never seen a Chinese soldier run or sweat before or since, and reported, less than half an hour after I had reached the compound and even before we sat down to dinner, that he had seen me here safe and sound.

The youthful-looking Oxford Ph.D. in anthropology, who had been seventeen years a missionary among the Miao tribes to the eastward and for the last two years head of the mission school here, was, with his younger assistant, one of the pleasantest British missionaries I met anywhere in China—or was it merely that they were the first people of the Western world I had seen since taking leave of my wife at the wireless tower just outside Yünnanfu two weeks before? It was a great excitement to get into a clean house, where fly-swatters, often scorned by lesser British missionaries long resident in this fly-bitten province, reduced almost to nothing one of the chief pests of the region.

All that was left of that day and the next as well was needed for paying off the coolies, bathing, shaving, letter-writing, repacking, and preparing for further travels. One of the first things I did was to place orders with the boss of a coolie *hong* for the three coolies I would need to Suifu on the Yang Tze, a distance northward equal to the one I had already come.

A stroll around the top of the city wall showed that there were few picturesque scenes or points of interest in Chaot'ung; it is merely a big market-town, more outside the west wall than within, lying on

a slight slope giving a good view of or from the surrounding country. Politically the place was ruled by a local commander who really lived in Yünnanfu, where the governor could keep an eye on him. He was a *man-tze*, or barbarian, from independent Nosuland across the Yang Tze to the westward. This Nosu or Lolo who won the favor of T'ang Ch'i-yao earned enough in four years to open a big street where there never was a street before, and was building at the end of it a big new stone *p'ai-fang* in honor of himself and the newly opened improvement, the only stone arch I ever saw building in China, numerous as are its old ones. As elsewhere the dictator had given little for the property confiscated, while the new houses along it were owned and rented by the absent ruler.

Opium was sold in an open shop in the back of the same building as the police-station; ten years before, according to my hosts, a smoker in this region was rather the exception. Even next morning, more than half a day after I got in, the caravan was still streaming in through the big crowded west suburb. It happened that I had brought beautiful weather, for which the town seemed duly grateful, since it had rained every day for weeks until the day I came. There had been the same trouble getting rain here as in the capital of the province, perhaps because the two cities are at just the same altitude, and here they had tried still another scheme, with success equal to those concocted in Yünnanfu. An old Chinese classic assures all those who care to read it that if you laugh at a dog it will rain. So when the ground began to break up and the crops faced ruin from the drouth, the people of Chaot'ung fixed up a dog in the most fantastic possible costume and manner and paraded him through the city and out to the temple fifteen *li* away, every one laughing uproariously at him, even the foreigners in spite of their anti-superstitious calling not being able to keep from doing so. Unfortunately there is no absolute proof that this brought on the far too copious rains, for with the Chinese genius for not trusting all one's eggs in one basket they also took out the rain-god and paraded him through the streets, pouring water on him, thereby ruining what might have been excellent proof of the truth of the old Chinese classics. After so dry a May that it ruined the poppy crop and did irreparable damage to the opium supply, or at least to its price, for the ensuing year, they got so much rain that it almost ruined the later summer crops. My hosts opined it might rain little for a month or so now, though that might be over-optimistic.



## CHAPTER XIX

### AMONG CHINA'S UNABSORBED TRIBES

**I**F Chaot'ung itself is of little interest, only a short day's travel eastward brings new and very decided ones. It was my good fortune that the very day I should have chosen to go over into Kweichow, most isolated province of China, made me just in time for a great annual Miao festival. The good weather I had brought Chaot'ung did not last, and it rained all day on my ride up into the mountains by a trail compared to which the great overland highway I had left was at its worst excellent. On the almost barren but lightly evergreened foot-hills at the eastern edge of the oozy, rich Chaot'ung plain there are outcroppings of coal. The Chinese had dug shallow pits into them, the openings so small that only boys can carry out the coal, in flat baskets on their backs, and they go bent double, with a short crutch-headed stick in each hand to make their arms the length of their legs, in which four-footed way they march even outside the mines. The miners lived in dugout kennels by no means equal in comfort or cleanliness to the dens of most beasts, and like a great colony of ant-hills the graveled heaps sprinkled black from the digging of these human moles stretched for twenty *li* up the stony hillside. The rest of the trip had little to offer except hard going and ever finer scenery, so often synonymous. Two Hwa Miao had been sent down to carry the few things I might need on this side-trip, but they moved so slowly under less than one Chinese coolie would have carried without complaint that they did not arrive at the center of the mission work among their tribe until late next morning.

Shih-men-k'an, or "Stone Gateway," as the place on an old overland trail where great stone steps dip down through a gorge was called long before they came, is visible from afar now for the big cluster of white-washed buildings which the British Methodists have made their headquarters in this mountainous corner of western Kweichow. Here there was not merely a chapel, school, dispensary—though no doctors except the woman physician who came weekly from the Chaot'ung mission hospital—the start of an orphanage and the beginnings of a

leper asylum, but more practical aids still to the hill-grubbing "Flowery Miao." The successor of the man who carried on this work until typhoid laid him away in a big stone grave of Miao-Chinese style on a hill overlooking a great stretch of the rocky, mountainous realm in which he labored, has improved their maize and potatoes, introduced new crops, and benefited their ancient agricultural methods. The large experimental garden of the reverend farmer was an excellent example of the ordinary layman's notion of real missionary work among the backward races. The region can give as well as receive; of various plants unknown to the West it grows a white thorny bush bearing large raspberries a brilliant orange in color and of a delicious, slightly black-berry taste.

The chief missionary and an assistant, Yang and I, and a group of Miao carriers with what the Chinese would have considered child's loads set out late in the morning for the scene of the festival, going down and up gorge walls such as I had never dreamed of subjecting a horse to carry me on; but experience changes the point of view, and the missionaries rode every yard of the journey. The mountain vistas outdid even those of Yünnan; mighty heaps of earth, with ever mightier gorges between them, were piled on every hand, cultivation sometimes covering all the visible landscape as with a crazy-quilt, rich red patches alternating with green of as fantastic shape, tumbled away at often strange angles until they disappeared in the haze of the high far horizon. Here and there high above all else remained a bit of real old forest primeval; the sloping patch-fields came clear down to the very brink of mighty chasms, into which they fall bit by bit as the precipitous thousand-foot walls encroach more and more upon them by crumbling away. I cannot imagine a more delightful experience than a ride across western Kweichow on a bright sunny day, cloud-shadows playing like motion-pictures across the vast mountain landscape; even in the rain it was a scene worth coming far to see.

The slopes of Miaoland were gay with buckwheat-fields in blossom; girls in short skirts, big wooden combs in bigger masses of hair over their ears, hoed corn in more than half-perpendicular patches; if we came unexpectedly upon them the married women were likely to be naked to the waist, for convenience at the frequent meal-times of the latest member of the family, but they ran to dress, like naughty school-girls caught by the teacher, when the missionaries appeared. Miao villages never straddle the trail, nor do their huts have Chinese door-gods or upright red papers with characters calling down happiness upon



Between her much decorated unmarried state and the rest of her life, during which she wears no other ornament than her cone-shaped hair, the Miao woman runs the whole gamut of femininity



The trident is the oldest form of weapon still carried by the feudal warriors of the Nosu, whom we miscall the "Lolos,"



Two Miao sisters who graced the festivities from first to last displayed several costumes of increasing splendor

the inmates; their clusters of low thatched roofs are often so hidden among apple, peach, walnut, and other trees, including clumps of small bamboos, that one may pass close by without noticing them. They are fully as indifferent to dirt as the Chinese, except that it is "somewhat cleaner dirt," as some one has put it, since they do not use what the Celestials use most to fertilize their fields. But the last word in misery is the interior of a Miao hut. Of their buckwheat the Miao make, apparently without any outside influence, a kind of pancake several times thicker than ours, taking it with them to the fields or on their festival-picnics and eating it hot or cold. Their winter oats are cut in June, buckwheat in July, maize in the autumn, at which time they normally pay in corn some of the cost of the missionary work among them. Not their only Scotch characteristic is that oatmeal is their great stand-by, though even the Scots might decline to live on their form of it. They roast the oats whole, grind them in primitive hut contrivances, and take the uncooked meal along in a bag. When they must eat, they break a pair of chop-sticks from the nearest bush, half fill with meal the wooden bowl they carry, and mix it with water from the nearest stream, thick or thin according as they are more hungry or thirsty. Just now they were almost in a famine condition in many parts of the great parish because of the set-back unseasonable weather the summer before had given the corn crop, and until this year's buckwheat should be ready they were living on food picked up from the fields and hedges and ordinarily given to pigs. The missionaries had more than once seen a man drop dead of starvation on the trail; yet they all looked very sturdy and anything but suffering severely from lack of nourishment.

Toward what was probably sunset we made out through the mists a white building of some size beyond another great gorge on a knoll overlooking much of the world, and before taking the dip we found some twoscore Miao school-boys with flags and a teacher or two lined up in military formation on either side of the trail. There had to be some speechifying in the rain; then we rode on to the chapel and mission-station of Hmao Kao, as nearly as our letters indicate the throaty Miao language. There was a church of rectangular form, its earth floor lined with many rough benches that no doubt seemed the height of luxury to the earth- or stone-squatting tribesmen. Close to this was another building, outwardly whitewashed also, like the church, half of it the crowded home of the Miao semi-pastor caretaker and family, not to mention all the animals, friends, guests, and carriers who

could find room to lie down in it, the rest a room reserved for the missionaries, with a Chinese table and sawhorses in which we soon had our cots set up.

Morning brought with it a brilliant Sunday, most of which I spent sitting and reading out in the sunshine, recovering not only from the strenuous days behind me but from the kick of a missionary's vicious horse that had barely failed to break my leg. Yang also looked weary, though he would not have admitted it. My conscience had more and more pricked me to see him plod behind me, his limp still with him, his bare legs splashed with mud, his straw-shod feet pounded by the incessant stone-quarry miscalled trails, and do a man's work as cook and general servant in addition. That was why I jumped at the chance when the parson-farmer of Shih-men-k'an mentioned that we would find at Hmao Kao a little stallion hardly ten years old that had carried a not diaphanous missionary lady over the mountains of Kweichow for years, and which we could have for a ten-dollar check on an American seed-house. There he stood now, fat as a barrel and with a face that bespoke a kindly and dutiful disposition, but also gray! I almost broke down Yang's Chinese reserve, as contrasted to his tribal naïveté, by pointing out the animal and telling him that if he cared to take on the extra work of attending to it the horse was his to ride henceforth. Though it is getting ahead of the story let me add, lest the reader charge me with altruism, that I could fall back upon the new animal when my gelding, which was showing his travels if not his age, had to have a day without a rider, and that I could almost certainly sell him at the end of the journey for more than his price up in the wilds of Kweichow.

Some Miao girls in their festival dress had already arrived the night before, and to-day there was a general gathering of the clans from many miles round about for the Christian festival and sports on the morrow. Miao poured in over all the trails strung out across the great mountain landscape, until there were hundreds on Sunday and perhaps two thousand on the festive Monday, women probably most numerous, certainly most conspicuous. Unmarried girls arrived with their better clothes in bundles under their coarse felt capes, changing in gullies or corn-fields; women came from twenty-five or thirty *li* away, in some cases a whole day's travel, with their oatmeal and the baby in a felt-blanket bed and its gayest costume slung on their backs. Sunday was very solemn, however, except for the costumes

of the women, for the missionaries did not of course believe in gaiety on that day, and the Miao excellently reflected the missionary mien. Both pastors had good cameras, but they did not open them until the next day. Instead, they took advantage of the opportunity to fill the middle of the day with a three-hour Miao-Methodist service, and rounded it off with three or four somewhat shorter ones in the afternoon and evening. During the long midday service the women suckled and the children squalled, boys ran in and out, men displayed that restlessness of tribesmen not used to sitting in audiences; but missionaries in the East must get accustomed to many minor annoyances unknown in church at home. The men and women entered and left by different doors and sat on opposite sides of the central aisle; a score or more were baptized, and there was communion for all the converts, almost every one present receiving his crumb of buckwheat-cake and a sip of tea—in individual cups! The Miao love to sing, and the uncultivated gathering sang fully as well as the average country congregation at home, with more spirit, and with none of the distressful noises of Chinese attempting to accomplish a harmony completely alien to them. It might easily have been home-sickening to hear in this distant and unknown corner of the earth all the old familiar hymn tunes, including that of "Auld Lang Syne" and what we used at least to know in America as "How Dry I Am," though the Miao words no doubt had some other import.

Mission work began among the Miao by accident. Early in this century a British Methodist working among the Chinese to the west of the Kweichow capital was eating lunch on the trail one day when some Hwa Miao stopped to look at him. Instead of driving them off or insulting them in Chinese fashion, he smiled and offered them some bread. It was the first time within the memory of this lowly race that any one had shown kindness to them. When the strange foreigner invited them to his station, they came in a body; the news spread like a prairie-fire among all the Miao in western Kweichow, and they soon began pouring in from more than a week's journey away. Finding that some of them came from near Chaot'ung, the swamped pastor told them to go to his Yünnan colleague. Six went, taking with them a Chinese Testament, from which the other man read the same things they had heard in Kweichow, and gave the same signs of interest in their welfare, whereupon their race poured into his station also, until the authorities said they were planning a rebellion, and sanitary conditions began to get so bad even for China that something had to be

done about it. Moreover, the Miao did not like to stay down there on the plain, and with the help of a big chief of the landlord tribe land was acquired and a Miao headquarters opened at "Stone Gateway" back in Kweichow.

The Miao had no real religion of their own, beyond the fear of demons and the worship of trees, stones, and the like, though they laughed at Chinese idols. Far from being ancestor-worshippers, they believed that every one became a devil at death, dead children little devils, so that they buried carelessly and soon forgot the graves. The idea of a religion of kindness seems to have taken them by storm. I fancy the broader-minded even of missionaries would admit that they would have responded to any intelligent non-Chinese men who showed an altruistic interest in them, be they Christian, Mohammedan, or Buddhist. Unlike the Chinese, the Miao are emotional and run to mass movements, excellent subjects for the camp-meeting revival type of conversion. Moreover, they are accustomed to follow their chiefs; let the village elders accept Christianity and they were converted by villages. To-day, hardly a score of years after the work accidentally began among them, whitewashed chapels, some with schools, which were also unknown among the Miao, are scattered all through the mountains they inhabit; the head of the work assured me that he could travel in his parish for eighteen months, stopping at a Christian Miao village every night, and only make the circuit once. So it happens that these unsophisticated, stocky mountaineers who were here long before the Chinese conquered the southwest are now Methodists. One suspects that the Catholics lost a great opportunity in not forestalling this work among the Miao, for they are a docile and ignorant people, convertible in masses, with a primitive love of finery and elaborate formalities which makes them seem out of place under the drab teachings of Wesley.

The missionaries tell us that before they came the Miao had no morals, particularly in relations between the sexes. Now, they claim, 90 per cent of the girls of the Christian villages are pure when they enter the married state by a ceremony which includes middlemen as well as Methodist forms. They were great toppers, making a whisky of Indian corn, and were very fond of music and dancing. Several times a year, particularly on the fifth day of the fifth moon, they had great "pagan" festivals, gathering in vast congregations on a hillside and ending a day of debauch with a night of general promiscuity. From the naïve Miao point of view there was nothing wrong in this,



any more than in eating and drinking and otherwise making merry after months of hard work on their stony hillsides. Relations between the sexes were devoid of all that circumspection, and likewise hypocrisy, which Christianity spread through a considerable portion of the world. Every village had its club-house where the girls gathered nightly to sing and dance, and where the youths not of their own but from neighboring villages came to try them out as possible wives, and if a pair found that they were promised offspring, thereby proving that they were fit mates, they were united by some ceremony corresponding to marriage. These club-brothels, once universal, are now almost unknown, at least among the many villages professing Christianity, if the missionaries are not deceiving themselves, and they claim that they have definite and reliable knowledge, through their pastors, teachers, and the deacon in every village. We are asked to believe that the Hwa Miao no longer make whisky or plant the poppy, that they dance no more, and that in order to purge themselves completely of their wickedness, as seen by the missionaries, they have voluntarily done away with all their native musical instruments connected with the old "pagan" celebrations, so that all that is left them now, until such time as the phonograph and the saxophone shall bring their higher civilizing influences, is the simple kind of Pan's pipe which the Chinese call *lou-sen*.

Being men of understanding, the missionaries decided that it would not do just to have the Miao abolish their old customs without giving them something in place of them; hence such Christian festivals as we had come to see. Monday broke brilliant also, the air of Hmao Kao, nearly a mile and a half high, delightful. The slope behind the field on which the modified Western sports took place was soon covered with spectators, even though it was planted with corn, all the women and girls in their most flowery costumes, some of them open for infant refreshments, service à la carte. There were races and games, drilling and parading; one bright young teacher had worked up an amusing scene of David in the act of laying Goliath low, the teacher playing the surly giant and the smallest boy David, as nearly as I could follow the action. But though schools from various parts of the parish had been given carte blanche, within missionary limits, to get up their own exhibitions, most of them were merely poor copies of Western games, without their hilarity. Compared with what the spontaneous old sports seem to have been, these British-Methodist substitutes suggested

what a few solemn old ladies of New England might evolve in trying to find something to take the place of the *fiestas* of Seville. The festival was worth coming far to see, but its interest to the mere wanderer lay among the spectators.

They were indeed worthy the name of "Flowery Miao" by which they are distinguished from several other less picturesque branches of a wide-spread race. Hemp is grown throughout Miaoland in what Minnesota calls "sink-holes," fertile little hollows from ten to twenty feet in diameter, of which we had seen many along the way, carpeted as with a rich green rug. From the fiber-skin of the stems they weave their own cloth, making coarse-grained garments covered with patterns in at least all the colors of the rainbow. The men and the unmarried women would attract attention in a circus; compared to the girls they are colorless as a coal-pile. I despair of giving any clear notion of the multicolored ensemble of their jacket-blouses and the barely knee-length skirts below them, red perhaps predominating in the intricate patterns, but no conceivable combination of colors barred. Evidently there was nothing worn beneath the short, pleated skirts that swung so saucily as the girls walked, though some seemed to have superimposed one over the other several of these garments cut so conveniently for hoeing corn on a steep hillside. Beneath the big green and red paper umbrella, of Chinese origin, that is an unvarying part of the full-dress of the Miao girls, they were gorgeous figures indeed with the noonday sun filtering through upon them. The intricacy of their garments, however, was slight compared to the methods of doing the hair among the unmarried girls. Though it may merely be because it was sunburned from complete lack of hats, the hair was distinctly brown, sometimes with almost a reddish tinge, and though every girl had her individual fashion in lesser details, they all approached the world's championship for the size and compactness of what before bobbing befell us was known as an "ear-puff." Into these and wherever else a precarious foothold was to be had they had thrust every queer and elaborate ornament that hair will hold,—wooden combs, stilettos, any trinket lying loose about the house; gaily colored strings hung from silver gewgaws, tassels from metal gimcracks; spangles flashed as the wearer moved; a favorite adornment was porcupine-quills set upright, repulsive, one would think, to amorous young men. Then there were elaborate ear-rings, some in the form of silver chains that touched the shoulders, and the end was not there by any means.

While the Chinese women bind their feet, the Miao girls bind their

legs. In the corn-field they often go naked from the knees down, but on state occasions such as this they wear wrap-leggings, no less gay in color than the rest of their costume. There were leggings of blue and red, green and purple, maroon and yellow; two or three were evidently rooters for Princeton; some outdid the limits of mere language. The knees that flashed above these were as golden with sunburn as were their reddish-brown faces, or would have been if they were not as innocent of soaping as the bare feet in ordinary straw sandals which brought these glorious apparitions to a commonplace end. As if to confirm my suspicion that the hidden expanse between these two visible parts of what were known in the puritanical days of my youth as "the lower extremities" was in a similar condition, those in charge of the festivities coaxed the least bashful among the girls to run a race at taking off and putting on their leggings, with a sprint between. It was a solemn contest, as if the reformed hillmen saw in this the opening of some new immorality sponsored by the missionaries, but it recalled that Sunday afternoon when I went swimming after mass with a group of youthful coal-miners in Pennsylvania, who were spotless in their Sabbath best—until the bank of the swimming-hole disclosed the evasion of a rite common to Saturday night even in the best communities.

They were attractive girls for all that, in their new and unsoiled garments of festival, much more so than the greasy, trousered women of China. Short and sturdy as southern Italians, their life of equal work with the men in tilling the sparse, steep, stony hillsides gave them a muscular stoutness that neither garments could conceal nor near-famine remove. I had occasion once or twice to take a girl or a woman by the arm to arrange her for photographing, and one would have thought he had suddenly laid hold of a bantam-weight prize-fighter. They were entirely docile to this handling, at least in public, though they might not have been had not their confidence in the missionaries they had known for a decade or more carried over to the guest they had brought with them. Girls and men both rattled with copper "cash" on the ends of tassels falling from various parts of their weird costumes. The girls usually hung together in pairs; naïve children of nature, the Miao men thought nothing of holding hands with each other, though they did not even do this, at least within sight of the race that had brought them their new religion, with the girls.

When she is married, or at least as soon as she is assured of the natural consequence of marriage, the Miao girl puts away girlish things,

including all her adornments, most of the gaiety of her dress, especially her elaborate way of doing her hair. This she now winds tightly around a rod or stick fully a foot long set upright on the top of her head, in a simple cone that might easily be mistaken for a rhinoceros horn. One minor reform thus far almost vainly sponsored by the missionaries is to have the married women modify this custom, for in going about the housework they sometimes strike the top of this cone on the lintel of their low doors, and the stick may dent even a Miao skull. Between her much decorated maiden state and the drab remainder of her life, when she eschews ornaments completely, the Miao woman runs the whole gamut of femininity; but she will still walk many miles to a festival, and stand if necessary for hours in a corn-field amphitheater watching the contests in the field below while baby sleeps the sleep of the unspoiled, in proper preparation for the discomforts of Miao life ahead, in its nest of thick felt and homespun wrappings on her back. No doubt the havoc the baby could cause in the intricate hair-dress of maiden days between the time it wakes up and the moment that fact is noted is among the reasons why the married woman refuses to hamper herself with the adornments of her younger days.

The "heathen" festivals of the Miao are still held, especially the notorious "Fifth of the Fifth," but the missionaries claim they are attended by only a small fraction of the unconverted hordes that once flocked to them. The line between the Christian and non-Christian Miao is very distinct, and one obstacle to complete conversion is said to be the feudal enmities that exist in some of the villages or between separate villages. If the Wang family—most of the Miao have Chinese family names—accepts Christianity, the Lu family cannot, for the Wangs and the Lus have never patronized the same thing since the great rift broke out centuries ago between the two clans over the stealing of a pig; if that village over the gorge yonder abandons the ways of its forebears in favor of this queer lifeless festival of the foreigners, the rival village down there on the hillside a mile away cannot do so, for similar motives.

In their own language the Miao call themselves Ah-hmao. One should beware the contemptuous Chinese way of speaking of them as Miao-tze, the added syllable giving that hint of barbarian or animal with which the Celestials go out of their way to insult peoples they consider their inferiors. They have a very large vocabulary for so simple a people, with about eight tones, those Chinese props to mono-

syllabic difficulties that some concede to be an invention of the devil himself, giving speech a kind of fourth dimension, as some one of hard experience in learning it has said, turning it to music, as it were, so that you must remember not merely the words but the tune—and it is no simple melody. The Miao say they had a written language long ago, but that the man carrying the manuscript of it across the bridge dropped it and a big fish ate it. So many people are careless about making carbon copies! For all this naïve, face-saving story and attempt to explain to the sneering Chinese that but for an accident the Miao would be as civilized as they, there is no good reason to believe that their language had ever been written before the Miao “revival” early in this century, when the later victim of typhoid evolved a script for them. He took the simplest phonetic system he could find, based on shorthand, represented consonants by large characters much less intricate than the Chinese, used small ones for the less important vowels, and made the position of the latter with respect to the former indicate the tone. In contrast to Chinese, Miao is said to be easy to learn to read or to sing, but harder to talk. Now thousands of Miao, including some women, can read, and many write; but those few Miao students capable and desirous of continuing their studies beyond their mission schools must learn Chinese also.

The Chinese pride themselves on absorbing every race that comes into long contact with them, but this is only partly true of the Miao and of several other tribes of the mountainous southwest. The prevailing guess on the population of Kweichow Province runs around eight million, and only about half of these are Chinese. High mountains and swift rivers naturally make the southwest a racial garden, a tribal whirlpool, almost as bad as New York. I myself saw remnants of at least half a dozen races that have been, except in one instance, conquered but not absorbed by the Chinese. In fact, there are probably six or seven million tribespeople still living in territory which our maps grant to China. With the possible exception of the Miao, it is estimated that the most numerous are the Chung-chiah, now hardly distinguishable from, nor despised by, the Chinese, and related to the Tai, Shan, or Laos of Indo-China and Siam. Indeed, many Chinese claim that the Cantonese are of that race, the same which was driven out of its capital at Talifu some seven centuries ago, not by the Chinese but by their Mongol emperor, Kublai Khan. Besides the Hwa or “Flowery” Miao, there are the Ch’uan Miao of the rivers and, farther

east, the less subservient, more self-sufficient, land-owning "Black" Miao, who wear mainly garments of that color topped off with huge silver necklaces, and have not been easy prey even to the missionaries.

In the same territory as the Hwa Miao live also the I-bien or Nosu, a people which, thanks to a bad habit taught us by the Chinese, we miscall the "Lolos." They stood far above the other tribes in interest to me, because they have not merely remained unabsorbed but have never been conquered by the Chinese, though they live in China. A few Nosu women seemed unable to keep away from the festivities at Hmao Kao, even though these were in honor of a people they despise, and half a dozen had gathered by Sunday night, their manner a mixture of wondering if they would be welcome and the haughtiness of women aware that they are among their social inferiors. The Nosu men I saw later did not dress much differently from the Chinese, but it would be hard to imagine a greater contrast than a Nosu and a Miao woman. Tall and stately where the others were squat and sturdy, their much finer features suggesting a mixture of Mongol with some straight-featured race, they were to the Miao like Nordics to Sicilians. They wore long scholarly gowns of dignified colors, purple with black embroidered top seeming most in vogue, with split sides below the waist giving glimpses of roomy trousers reaching to the ankles and quietly embroidered at least about the bottoms. A voluminous cloth turban, usually black, large ear-rings, and a few finger-rings of equally heavy silver completed the costume, ending in black slippers. The women seemed a bit surly, and they certainly had an ample sense of their own importance, in contrast to the wondering, pleased-child countenance of the Miao, who have little more sense of personal dignity than our cotton-field darkies. In fact, the pair I induced, with great difficulty on one side and instant acquiescence on the other, to pose side by side before my camera suggested a Southern lady who had wandered out of untamable curiosity into a darky camp-meeting and been coaxed to stand beside a negress in her Sunday finery.

Half a day farther into Kweichow, I was promised, I should find a great Nosu center. Monday having been so kind to the festival and to photography, the younger missionary and I could hardly complain because Tuesday was rainy again, with low visibility for the magnificent Kweichow scenery and perilous mud slopes for the horses, worse if we dismounted and tried to walk. Yang perhaps had the best horse of the lot, for his barrel-shaped little stallion walked up or down any hill without the least sign of effort, while his rider beamed;

for this was not only saving his feet but his face, perhaps mine also, since it is no great honor to have a mud-splattered servant plodding behind you. The way was beautified by many big bushes of red and yellow rose or hawthorn berries, and we passed high above the "Heaven-born Bridge," a natural stone arch by which a small mountain river enters a mighty hill and flows for a mile or more through it, villages, woods, and fields far above. It was mainly by following the gigantic gorge of this little river that we reached toward noon Ssu-fang-ching ("Foursquare Well"), and took up our abode in a two-story foreign house built by my Scotch host of Yünnanfu, who had done the "spade work" of the mission to the Nosu before he had to withdraw for reasons of health. More than 8000 feet above sea-level now, with mountain vistas accordingly, I found that the stuffed-cotton mattress I had carried all this way was for once too thin, even though I never did put on the winter clothing Yünnanfu insisted I must have with me, whatever the cost of carrying.

A group of mainly Nosu young men had gathered here for a week-long Bible conference in charge of an Englishman and his wife from Chaot'ung. They were distinctly Orientals, yet their faces were not Chinese. Their manners were, however, as well as their costumes. The missionaries having an interest in the surface mines at the edge of Chaot'ung plain, the Nosu students here were formerly supplied with coal; but they burned such quantities that a change was necessary. Now they must supply their own, so they used very little, but burned instead the drawers of the school-desks furnished them by givers to missions in England, and when these were taken away from them they tore off and burned the big wooden tops of the desks. The place was dusty and unkempt to a Chinese degree also, for which the missionary had that day found an appropriate verse in the Bible, for he must speak gently on such matters. Nearly if not all these were "Black" Nosu, of the middle class of the tribe, not to mention a Min, an Ah-wu-tze, and isolated individuals of some of the other tribes that make this part of China an ethnological maelstrom. But not far away were to be found both a *t'uh-muh* ("earth-eye"), or feudal baron, and "white" Nosu slaves. In fact, on our way from Hmao Kao we had turned aside at Long-kai-tze, a "market" with an unused school and two rows of buildings, where many tribes gather to barter every ten or twelve days, to visit a big landlord who evidently saw no use in schooling for the people on his domain. There is not a town in Nosuland; all live on the soil, and the château of the overlord generally stands on a height

where he is indeed an "Earth Eye." Beyond a few mud huts we went through a great gate to an outer, then an inner, and finally an innermost court, the walls of the first two loopholed for rifle-fire. On the whole the place was Chinese, yet it had several reminders of the owner's house on an *hacienda* in the Andes. The inner courtyard of the feudal, castle-like residence was paved, steps and all, in solid granite blocks, and the personnel of the household, the men forward, the women retiring, hung about eavesdropping much like the Chinese.

But the T'uh-muh himself, it seemed, was not at home; nor was his brother, the next in command. It was the son of the latter by a Chinese concubine who received us, but as he had been in Shanghai, knew a few words of English, considered Chinese his native tongue, though he spoke the *I-chiah-hwa*, or Nosu language, to the servants, and was well dressed, almost dainty, nearly clean, and strictly Chinese in appearance and manner, we got little more out of the call than some Chinese politeness that was not entirely genuine and some tea and toasted squash-seeds. This Nosu family claimed to have been owners of their great domain for at least twenty centuries. Legend if not actual history has it that the Miao were once a powerful race in their own kingdom, but that the Nosu drove them farther and farther into the hills and took the land on which the Hwa Miao at least are now docile tenants, none of them owning land. Conditions in much of the three southwestern provinces of China are quite similar to the feudal system of medieval Europe. The "Earth Eyes," who own nearly all the land, are like the barons of the Middle Ages; under them come the "Black Bloods," freemen who must pay tribute at least to the extent of military service, and below these the tenants, serfs, and actual slaves. In the region of Ssu-fang-ching one can ride for three days without getting off the territory of one T'uh-muh; he had three thousand direct tenants and no one knew how many subtenants, and a *gwan-ssu*, or Chinese steward, to collect rents and taxes and otherwise carry out a steward's functions. When they become tenants, the Miao or Chinese pay a deposit in silver—ten to twelve taels had been the average the past few years—and unless the landlord wants them to leave they can only do so by abandoning the deposit. Just now the landlords preferred to have them go, for high prices and the real-estate boom had reached even this isolated part of the world, and his deposit was promptly returned to any tenant who asked for it, since others were ready to pay several times the old deposit and rental. The rent is paid in kind and is often a nominal sum,—a pig or a cow or a bit of



corn yearly; but when there is a wedding or a funeral in his family the T'uh-muh can call upon his tenants for special sums, and he can always require work of them and their cattle on his own land.

Since the Chinese in taking over the country merely put mandarins in place of the "Lolo" overlords, or made the overlords themselves mandarins, and at worst the "Earth Eye" has only to grease the palm of the Chinese official in nominal control of the district, the T'uh-muh are still virtually rulers of their region. Under such a system the landlord or his agents can plunder, torture, even murder a tenant or slave with comparative impunity. One T'uh-muh made it a practice to gouge out the eyes of any subordinate who displeased him. Whether or not they are getting them into heaven, the missionaries of Shih-men-k'an are doing good work in protecting the Miao from the exploiting Chinese and their Nosu landlords, who until the Methodists came indulged in any Neronic whim they pleased toward their servile, simple, good-natured tenant race. Indeed, the T'uh-muh were much opposed to the missionaries when they began work among the Miao, because they foresaw a loss of their unlimited power, and one of them severely beat the now deceased head of the mission, for which he ended his days in prison. The very man we were calling on had demanded double taxes when his son was married, and a missionary found Miao tenants in prison and took photographs of others being tortured in the outer courtyard, which seemed to have scared some reform into this particular family. So our race probably did not stand ace-high in that castle, though even the T'uh-muh himself would probably not have showed it crudely and openly, after the Western manner, but subtly, beneath an apparent welcome, just as his half-Chinese nephew was doing. In fact, one might almost have mistaken this for a Chinese establishment, for all the dirty Nosu retainers who lived in the lower hovels of the outer buildings. A traveling-chair hung under the eaves; in the room where we were received there were hard, high-backed Chinese chairs of state, red-cushioned divans, dragons and gods in paper on the door, and all the Chinese formalities, even to seeing us to the outmost gate, thereby accepting us at our own valuation as men of the first rank, when we took our leave.

Nosu pastor "Peter," father of Bible-student "Paul," went with me to another estate where there were real slaves as well as serf-tenants; for though the "White" Nosu are attached to the same land for generations, they are in no sense freemen. Evidently "Peter" himself could not tell a slave from a tenant, however, for on the way he called

out to a couple of men and a woman, each working alone in the fields, to know if they were slaves, and received a cheery, unhesitating, and apparently unresentful affirmative. At the estate a man in authority called in to be photographed a slave family that was hoeing corn. They lived in a den adjoining the rooms of the owner, which was itself a fly- and dust-swarmed place out of keeping with the landed wealth of the proprietor. The "White" Nosu man had an almost Aryan profile, but he was as cowed as any human being I have ever met, cringing as a beaten dog. He had been a slave as far back as memory or the records of his ancestors go. How it came about that the "Black Bloods" became the patricians and the "Whites" of the same tribe the slaves no one seems able to explain. The "Whites" may be a previous race that was conquered and enslaved, but everything except their social status indicates that they are of the same race. A number of "Black" Nosu hung about during our visit, and except that they had less cowed expressions and more freedom about the house there was no outward mark to distinguish them from the slaves. The only remnant of the distinctive male Nosu costume they retained was a dull-white, thick felt cape, pleated, and surely forty feet around the bottom. They brought out the ancient weapons with which they give military protection to their T'uh-muh lord,—a flint-lock of nearly a century ago, another made at home more or less like it from a rusted barrel found somewhere, and a kind of trident such as they used in ancient times. These warriors often wrangle over trifling affairs and "get very angry," as a Chinese put it; indeed, there are frequent quarrels between the "Earth Eyes" themselves, as among their prototypes of the Middle Ages, and many a landlord has been reduced by the fighting and trickery of his rivals to no landlord at all.

The caste system is very rigid, and there is little intermarriage among the three classes of Nosu. The "Blacks" often own their land, but the "Whites" themselves may be bought and sold. The owner can kill a slave and suffer no consequences; for even if he could not be bribed, almost any Chinese mandarin would say that any man has a perfect right to kill his own slave—perhaps adding that his spirit should be appeased so that it will not return and trouble the living. If a tenant cannot pay his tribute, he sells himself to the landlord for a few ounces of silver. Men who offer themselves to T'uh-muh for land to cultivate in order to keep from starving are called "caught slaves," as distinguished from hereditary slaves. Yet their children are the absolute property of the master. Though slaves live in the

same compound, often the same house, as the owner, their food is poorer than that given the master's horse and their spirits are so broken that they seldom try to escape, for which the punishment is severe if they are caught. Some Christian converts among the Nosu have changed their slaves to tenants. Not only is this in keeping with the Bible, according to the missionaries, who seem unable to find slavery in that ancient book, but it is sometimes cheaper; for one thing the landlord does not have to support his tenants in lean times. Sometimes a T'uh-muh has so many slaves that he cannot feed them, as happened to one mission student of that class. But the children of slaves are always slaves, even if the parents have now and then been allowed to plant for themselves or turned loose by their masters in time of famine.

I hope I am not boring the reader with all this, but if he knew what a place the "Lolos" have in China and the minds of the Chinese he would realize that we cannot pass them by in silence. The origin of this people is not certain. They themselves assert that the Tibetans are a degenerate branch of their race; but men from Lhasa cannot talk with them, there is no similarity between the Nosu and Tibetan written languages, nor any Buddhism or its degenerate offspring, Lamaism, among the "Lolos." Yet certain signs indicate that the Nosu may be one of the very early races of Asia. In the days when the Chinese were not a nation, but a lot of more or less independent states—as they are to-day, for that matter—what is now Yünnanfu was the capital of a Nosu kingdom. It is supposed that when Emperor Hoang Ti unified the nation in 220 B.C. or when Kublai Kahn reconquered Yünnan, some of this race in what is now Kweichow acknowledged the Chinese claim and offered to recognize the emperor and put themselves under the governor of the province on the semi-independent basis in which they still exist, while many more of them fled across the Golden Sands, as the great unnavigable loop of the upper Yang Tze is called, and established themselves in what still appears on our maps as the territory of the "Independent Lolos." The adjective is correct, for they are as independent to-day in their mountain fastnesses as before the Christian era. But the name by which they are known even in our encyclopedias is merely another example of the Chinese genius for insulting outside barbarians. Indeed, they often refer to them as *man-tze*, meaning "barbarian," or by the little less brutal term Babu. But the most common word for them—beyond their reach—is that by

which the world at large knows them, if at all. Now, this people has the custom of preserving to the third or fourth generation the souls of its ancestors in miniature hampers or baskets, and the Chinese name for such a basket is *lolo*; hence when that word is used the untamed hillmen suppose their forefathers are being insulted, a favorite Chinese and Oriental style of cursing, and take vengeance accordingly. There are several names to which they answer with something besides an attempt to kill the speaker. One, especially in Kweichow Province, is "Nosu"; another is "Lao-pen-chiah"—the "old original people." They are respectfully known also as the "I-bien," and perhaps the politest name of all is "I-chiah," or "original race," an individual being an "I-chiah-ren," or person of the original race. It is a pity that our geographers and encyclopedists, innocently taking their cue from the subtle Chinese, have perpetuated a name to which those to whom it is applied answer only with a rifle-bullet or a meat-ax. Perhaps it is impossible to change a habit of many years in our Western nomenclature, but it would be well if we could teach ourselves to say, or at least to write, since so few of us ever have occasion to say it, something better than the insulting term "Lolo." Perhaps "I-bien" would be best, since we have no proof that they are really the "old original people."

It goes without saying that I should gladly have given my best hat to have visited the "Independent Lolos" at home, now that I was passing within a hundred *li* of them. But quite aside from any hesitancy to leave my hide among them, that would have been impossible. Not only do they control all the few ferries across the Golden Sands; the Chinese authorities on the eastern side are diligent beyond their wont in keeping visitors from crossing. There are two ways in which I might possibly have done so,—by ingratiating myself with one of the few British missionaries working with their brethren in Kweichow and inducing him to go with me, or by remaining there for years as a missionary until I had won their confidence myself! There is a certain intercourse between the Nosu of Kweichow and their independent relatives beyond the turbulent, rock-strewn northward sweep of the upper Yang Tze; some go back and forth, and even bring back wives from over there—like our immigrants going back to the "old country" for their brides; but neither foreigners nor Chinese normally find the way open. Once a British photographer eluded the watchfulness of the Chinese authorities and got across, but he was killed, and only one of his coolies, who had been left for dead, came back to tell the story.



The Nosu woman's turban is black, her gown most often purple, her size imposing, and her manner a little surly



The deportment as well as the stature and costume of the Nosu woman is a contrast to that of the Miao



A "white" Nosu slave, as were his ancestors as far back as memory or records goes with a timid, cringing attitude quite unlike the "black" warriors



A family of "white" Nosu slaves was called in from the fields to face my camera

Then there is the better known case of Lieutenant Brooke, who also left his bones among them. There is no record of an American ever having entered "Babuland." Two members of the mission of which I was then the honorably treated if not honored guest seem to be the only Caucasians who have accomplished that feat and returned to boast of it. He who later fell victim of typhoid while nursing my anthropological host of Chaot'ung went across the river with Nosu friends in 1903, climbed forty *li* inland and spent one night there—and wrote a large book about it; and only eight months before the man who was my companion on the journey to Ssu-fang-ching had gone in one day's journey, as far as Brooke's grave, and passed two nights in the forbidden land.

Foreigners who can get the backing of an I-bien chief and elude the watchful Chinese can travel in the territory of that chief and those of his friends, but not elsewhere, for tribal warfare wages exactly as between the border chiefs of old Scotland. The chieftain and his son who met my companion on the eastern side wore foreign shoes over startlingly yellow socks, the pairs of which had got mixed up between father and son. They were very hospitable, particularly in the matter of keeping the visitor out of the territory of other chiefs with whom they were at enmity. A crude boat built for the swift waters of one of the few places where the Golden Sands can be crossed having set them down on the western bank, they drank honey as an appetizer and rode away on mules and horses, the latter almost as necessary to the Nosu as to the desert Arab, up and ever up through jungled woods of undisturbed beauty, and with much fine timber, though there was a little cultivation. The "roads" were steep, difficult, and "narrow as the path of a bird." There is not a town in "Babuland": like their brethren of Kweichow the people scatter through the mountains, perhaps clustering a bit about the far-seeing castles of the overlords. Every "Babu" establishment had fierce dogs, which had to be held in check by main force before the ill-smelling stranger. The home of his "Earth Eye" host was a big house on a high mountain summit, commanding a wonderful view. They entered the kitchen first—not unwillingly, I take it, for it was eleven before they breakfasted. There was a fire on the floor with mats about it, where they were soon served basins of water with many spoonfuls of buckwheat-flour, or oatmeal, which on journeys and military expeditions the I-bien carry in sacks, like the Miao. They were expected to finish this pig-feed, but soon got a good meal of rice and vegetables, with pork cooked in

various ways. The "Lolos" eat goat-flesh also, gnawing at big chunks of meat in their hands, the fierce dogs snatching the scraps. They eat no salt, which is so expensive that it passes as money. The family idols were screened off in one corner, and in other corners of the room were a large mill and a stabled horse. Large pillars supported beams and rafters of what seemed to be a pine roof. The men wore a kind of military uniform, padded jackets, some yellow, red, blue, amber, and with head-dresses to match—or otherwise. A few had red, yellow, or blue turbans, with two pieces of cloth a foot long down their backs; most of them had large blue felt capes, very heavy and warm. Each carried an old gun, among the various makes and patterns being a German model of thirty years ago and an English weapon fifty years old. Sleeping accommodations were similar to the rougher forms of such penances among the Chinese.

The young men spent the evening chattering and playing a kind of mandolin and flute, and in wrestling and dancing. The men of "Babuland" travel much among their own and allied tribes, but sing about and sigh for their native mountains until they see them again. The girls and women never dance, probably because the dance is a religious ceremony and not a mere amusement. Perhaps the most noticeable difference between the Chinese and their unconquered "subjects" of these half-inaccessible mountains is the relative position of women. Nosu women, unlike those of China, have free social intercourse with the men, with much laughter and untrammelled companionship—hence much immorality, according to the missionaries who spent a night or two among them. In China a man and wife could not even share the same umbrella in public; in "Lololand" a man and woman often share the same cloak. The women are pleasing in silks and long flowing skirts, with their natural feet, and a girl is as welcome as a boy in a Nosu family. One cannot but wonder if this freedom and equality of women is not a sign that they are related to the polyandrous Tibetans.

The Nosu do not usually become engaged until the parties are both old enough to make their own choice, though with that world-wide tendency to copy the ways, both silly and good, of the powerful and wealthy about them, the bad Chinese custom is gradually seeping in. The same may be said, in passing, of their burials. The unregenerate "Lolos" burn their dead, in great piles of wood, amid many ceremonies. The idea of burial in the cold ground instead of the comforting blaze of the cremation-fire strikes terror to the heart of these dwellers in cold, lofty mountains. If the body burns quickly, it was that of a



good man—any school-boy of course knows that an old soak would burn badly. In the old-fashioned ceremony the dead man's horse is made frantic, whereupon they say that its master's soul has come to ride it, and there is a great fight among the women of his household for possession of the animal. But the Nosu are gradually adopting, even west of the river, the filthy, wasteful Chinese form of disposing of the dead.

In the good old days the Nosu young man always "stole" his bride, and a glorious fight centered about the bride's veil, her people trying to throw it on the roof of the house and his to trample it underfoot on the threshold, thereby establishing the respective positions of the newly-weds in the domestic scheme of things. Men were sometimes killed at this game. They still pretend that the bride is taken by force, though long since engaged, and this playful little custom may wreck entirely the home she is leaving; but in Kweichow the missionaries are gradually introducing our own drab and anemic ceremony. The bride goes on horseback to her new home, all the groom's male relatives, fully armed, escorting her. During the wedding ceremony the man's mother offers the bride, first a little green branch in a vase of water, as a hint to fecundity, then a comb, saying, "Comb yourself every day before cooking, in order that your hair shall not fall into the soup." Yet there are people who think that "wild" tribes have no wisdom! Some brides do not come back to their childhood home until ten years after marriage, but then they may stay two or three years, even as with us.

Formerly the Nosu men, especially the T'uh-muh, were frank and open in such immoralities as they had, and they would never break a promise, never deceive, were in most matters generous and honorable; but perhaps too much intercourse with the Chinese has cured them of those primitive weaknesses. Now they kidnap girls, kill fathers, steal land, and there is no redress. A T'uh-muh recently killed his brother to get his land, giving the excuse that if he had not, the brother would have killed him for the same motive. Yet chivalry is not dead among these Asiatic Scottish chieftains, for they appropriate a land-owning widow rather than kill her. Since women are the equal of men, a widow may and often does become a T'uh-muh; but as they seem to feel the need of "protection," some man usually looks after them, and the man who takes on several widows, visiting them in turn, becomes the legal possessor of their lands as well as of their affections. If this is a general state of affairs, it is perhaps fortunate that the Nosu have

no family names, though many of them have had to take such a name in Chinese in order legally to hold land; hence whole villages adopt the same name, which is often unknown to any one except the heads of the families.

One should hesitate to believe anything the Chinese report about those they treat as "barbarians." Thus those of us who have thought of the "Lolos" at all have no doubt usually thought of them as mere savages, akin to the head-hunters of Formosa or the pygmies of the African jungle. They are not only not that but in a number of ways superior to the Chinese who hedge them in and pretend to rule them. They have, for instance, an old written language and a considerable literature, though like their country these are almost unexplored. A stranger not acquainted with Chinese writing might easily at first sight mistake a Nosu for a Chinese book; yet they are quite different. True, the language is monosyllabic, with five tones; there is no alphabet, but ideographs without phonetic value; but these are much simpler than Chinese, more like prehistoric drawings or the marks that children or tramps make, and the upright lines begin at the left of page and book. Nosu literature, like Chinese, is tiresome in its sameness of thought, noted for its rhythm and the cadence of the words rather than for the freshness and originality of ideas or sentiments. Now the wizards are almost the only ones who can read what might in their infancy have been Chinese characters—though given the Celestial temperament, theirs were probably complex from the beginning. Even the T'uh-muh use Chinese in contracts with their tenants.

If the "Lolos" had to do with a sympathetic nation, says a French priest who has long lived among those of Kweichow, they probably would readily have combined with it; but "the Chinese have even less spirit of assimilation than the English; they hunt, kill, and massacre, but rarely ally." Passing over this Gallic back-slap at a rival race, it is true that the Chinese and the "barbarians" within the mountainous loop formed by the Yang Tze in coming down stunned and blinded from its source in the sky-high Tibetan mountains are apparently irreconcilable enemies. Every generation the "Lolos" plan to rebel; once they joined the Mohammedans in what might have been a successful revolt had not the Mussulmans played them false and won their everlasting enmity. The Chinese defeated the "Lolo" forces sent across the river, but they remain invincible in their own mountains, and the Chinese suffer most from the chronic hostilities between the two races.

To this day the unconquered tribes continue to harass the people credited by the world at large with conquering them centuries ago; they are constantly raiding Chinese territory, murdering as many as they can, and carrying others off as slaves. On the Chinese side of the river there are many white towers, which, in times of peace, are used for grain-storage; during a "Babu" invasion, as lookouts, forts, and refuges for the non-combatants. About once a year, when the last raid has grown dim and they are again in need of harvest-hands, the "Lolos" make a foray across the river in quest of slaves. There is a kind of no-man's-land on either side of this, though the always land-hungry Chinese encroach with their cultivation bit by bit upon the eastern shore, until another gang of them is carried off. The Miao have asked permission to settle on this east bank, since the Nosu rarely take them as slaves, though there is a story of one group of captives who used to sing Miao songs on the western side of the river, the voices heard by their people on the "tame" side growing fewer and fewer as the years rolled by, until they died out entirely. Not only are adults kidnapped, but children are sometimes sold over the river by parents or others, and those Chinese who go across for commercial or other reasons run a great risk of remaining as slaves. My companion at Ssu-fang-ching met several Chinese slaves in "Lololand," all with sad stories of capture, and most of them begging to be rescued. Toward this he could do nothing, though his own Chinese servant was not molested, and now and again Chinese become "blood brothers" of "Lolo" chieftains, as did the two missionaries, and pass almost freely to and fro. The Chinese slaves are in the main not cruelly treated or even badly off. They are sometimes allowed to marry Nosu women; some indeed are forced to marry among the permanent slaves; some get their freedom and a piece of land; occasionally one is allowed to go back to "China," though they are generally kept even in old age, lest they lead an invading army over the trails they have learned. In short, the "Lolos" beyond the Golden Sands are independent indeed; it is as if the Indians we claim to rule over were supreme in Oklahoma or the Florida Everglades, and in the habit of taking some of the rest of us as slaves.

But the circle of Chinese about them is constantly contracting. The Nosu themselves say they are decreasing in numbers, that there are only half as many of them as there were a century ago. One reason is because opium was planted across the Golden Sands when it was forbidden in China, and it was so cheap that the "Babu" themselves

took to using it; also the traffic in this helped to open up the country and brought in certain other misfortunes. Then feuds, civil wars, licentiousness, unsanitary living, murder to increase lands, and similar causes play their part, and no doubt in time the "Lolos" will go the way of all "wild" tribes.

The "Lolo" story of the creation of man seems worth repeating. Kedze, the Nosu god, took some earth in the west, carried it to the east, and made a statue of mud. Night fell before the job was done, and in the morning Kedze found the unfinished statue destroyed. He tried again, with the same result. On the third day he began the task once more, and then kept awake to watch. Just at midnight the spirit of the earth came and began to destroy the "biscuit" statue. "What are you doing?" cried Kedze. "And what are you doing?" retorted the earth-spirit. "I'm trying to make a man." "There is no objection to your making a man, but the earth belongs to me." At length they came to terms, and Kedze promised to give back the earth at the end of sixty years. That is why man usually lives only one cycle of Cathay. Whatever we may think of the mud story, the tale of the flood is so general that one cannot but admit that there probably was considerable water at one time. At least the Catholic priest already subpoenaed testifies that the submitted tribe among which he works have a tradition of the flood, after which a brother and sister reseeded the earth.

The Methodists have had some success during the past twenty years among the "tame" Nosu of Kweichow, and "wild" ones from across the river now and then turn against their wizards and come to the Chaot'ung mission hospital. But they are not so "flocky" as the Miao, as is to be expected of a more dignified people, and *lolos* are still to be found tucked away in the walls of their houses or among the rocks outside, though there is no difficulty in getting such soulful souvenirs now in western Kweichow. Besides, I have been laboring in vain if I have not given a hint of the likeness of the "Lolos" to the canny Scots. A missionary gave a Bible in Chinese to a Nosu chieftain—who held the Chinese A.B. degree. A few days later he handed it back, saying that he could write a better book than that himself, and would the missionary please give him a modern pistol instead.

I should have liked to go on to Kweiyang, the only provincial capital in China that I did not see; but there are limits to everything, and I had been assured that I would find very little new and would miss

China's perhaps greatest province if I went back to civilization through Kweichow. I had seen elsewhere the "Black Miao" who are numerous west of Kweiyang, and I had seen in Kwangsi the Chung-chiah who make up a large part of the population of this even more isolated province. So I turned back to Chaot'ung, alone as far as my own race was concerned, and had splendid weather to Hmao Kao, now almost deserted, colorless but for a landscape beautiful under a full moon. The next day was brilliant, a wonderful day's ride, with the glorious landscapes of western Kweichow heaped up on every side, now along mighty ravines among remarkably terraced mountains, the world piling away to a blue and then a purple infinity. The Miao girls were back in the fields now, still in flowery costumes, but of an older vintage. Latest word from the region says that the crops they were then hoeing were almost a complete failure, and that destitution and starvation are rampant among them.

There were no fewer than six English people at Shih-men-k'an, where I lay half the afternoon reading under the pine-trees. But the world was hidden in snow-white fog when Yang and I set out with two Miao carriers again next morning and retraced the hardy trail to Chaot'ung in the center of its big plain, with more drizzle than sunshine. The mission out on the hill-slope among the graves beyond the east wall I had entirely to myself, and I could give orders even to have removed out of hearing the rooster that had ruined another night there. So rarely do I sleep in the same house twice, or at least on two separate occasions, that this had all the excitements of an unusual experience. It was vacation-time, and the only foreigners in town were two British women at the hospital inside the city, one the only physician between Yünnanfu and the Yang Tze, who, together with the wife then at Ssu-fang-ching, was to die of typhus before the year was out.

## CHAPTER XX

### ON TO THE YANG TZE KIANG

**T**HOUGH it is considered a twelve-day journey from Chao-t'ung to Suifu on the Yang Tze, as from Yünnanfu there, the road northward is all downhill after the first hundred *li* of level going, and I could hope to do better, especially as at this high-water season the last two days' journey could perhaps be made by boat in half a day. Moreover, my loads were constantly being reduced by eating and use, and Yang got a Chinese saddle, little more than a wooden frame with some gay painting on it, across which went most of his *pukai*, so that there was that much less for the coolies to carry. The coolie boss solemnly promised non-opium-smokers this time; though I hardly think they went entirely without opium, and I am sure at least one of them did not. The coolies agreed, in writing—if a tissue-paper document covered with Chinese characters and red seals can fairly be called that—to do the usual ten days to the probable boat place in eight, if paid the usual ten dollars for the trip and a tip of a dollar each if they made it in that time. I did not propose to hurry past anything that needed seeing; but one can see, at the best speed even tipped coolies can carry, all there is to be seen on a journey through country already quite familiar, and I did not want the constant worry of goading them on. I sent my card to the mandarin in case he wished to furnish me special protection, and he sent the usual four soldiers at which my safety seemed to be rated by the Yünnan authorities.

With two horses, three coolies, and four warriors, Yang and I were off at a fairly good hour, and all morning we jogged across the Chao-t'ung plain between mountains, growing more corn than rice, the sun unclouded. There was a bit of a climb and descent where the trail emerged from the plain early in the afternoon; then the rest of the day lay along a stony river-bottom, crossing the meandering stream times without number before I brought up for the night in a mud den at Wuchai. I had traveled more than thirty miles, and the coolies



Still another remnant of the many tribes of southwestern China, an Ah-wu-tze widow with her son and daughter



A Min woman, of a much depleted tribe, and a Chinese woman in the old-style costume and the inevitable bound feet



The trail now and then marched almost through a frontless Chinese school of the old style, which left off its shrieking to flock, teacher and all, about the foreigner



The mere actors are left with little attention when a foreigner with a camera mounts the box of the haughty ruler of the district in which a theatrical performance is caterwauling



were not in until dark, though along most of the road they, like my horse, had been able to trot.

Each day of that descent upon the Yang Tze was marked by some minor incident. That of this first day occurred as I was dismounting to wait for my party at a hut just over the slight ridge. I felt a sudden electric shock in my right leg just as it left the stirrup and whirled to see a yellow tail disappearing around a corner of the hut. The scavenger curs of China usually confine their attacks to barking, whereas this one had not cracked a sound, nor could I find anything of him when, stick in hand, I dashed not only around but through the hovel in my eagerness to return his call. All I ever saw or heard of the one assailant of my Chinese trip was the flash of that yellow tail. Though the skin was broken in several places, neither sock nor trouser-leg was, and it turned out that no harm had been done; but the beast evidently struck a nerve, and for months afterward the outside of that foot was devoid of feeling.

An hour beyond Wuchai the overland trail suddenly pitches headlong down from the great plateau I had been on ever since coming up the French railway more than two months before, by a great winding stone stairway like that of a pagoda, so steep that even the Chinese could not ride animals or coolies up or down it. Just before the drop begins, at a cluster of huts which my coolies said rejoices in the name of Lou-ha-li, a thin white stream dropped literally out of the clouds, swirling about a sheer-faced mountain, and at the bottom of those mighty steps we picked up this stream and followed it all the way to the Yang Tze. The strained look on the faces of not only the countless coolies carrying great loads up this staired gorge but of all the ascending travelers we met made us glad we were going down instead of coming up. It had rained during the night, though little by day, which made the road, here half-tunnel along a mountain gorge, there of stones built up out on the edge of the river that rapidly grew in importance as well as impetuosity, no easy going. That day's incident—unless it was the drop itself—came toward noon. The small horse, which I had been riding in order to give the gelding a half-rest in carrying Yang, who was much lighter, missed one of these built-up sections of the trail where it went under water along the river at the foot of a sheer rock cliff, and went for a swim, saddle, saddle-bags, and all. He was not only a wonderful stair-climber, however, but a wise little stallion under all circumstances, so that instead of being swept away by the racing yellow river, he quickly began swimming up-

stream, and eventually, as cleverly as any human being could have done it, fought his way back to where he had dropped in. Yang, who was something of a joker, reported when he next fed the horses that they were whispering together over their grass and comparing notes on their swims. He, by the way, protested against riding my horse, and as surely as I turned my back would be off and plodding behind him. Then, too, I walked as much as I rode, and your Chinese servant worthy the name will never ride while his master is walking.

We made the usual noonday stop at Ta Kuan, a walled town hanging on a hillside about mighty gorges, for a late lunch and some re-shoeing, then pushed on thirty-five *li* to a village for the night. This was called Hsiao Ho, which means small river, evidently our own, for here it joined a somewhat larger and equally precipitous one. I got a swim, but there was only a half-ruined mud hut available, so that not only Yang and the horses but even the three coolies slept with me.

It rained again during the night, but none on the third day; hence the stones were not always slippery, for which we were thankful, as the trail crawled most of the time along the faces of cliffs. This was often by terrible steps, well above the river, which roared incessantly and ever louder in our ears, and now and then over a precarious bridge through which we could easily have dropped a horse. The difficulties of this "highway" were far beyond the stay-at-home American imagination; often my carriers just managed to cross a mountain stream raging down over precarious rocks on the very edge of the main river directly below; in other places the mountain wall was piled up in many slippery rock ledges hardly three feet wide, one of which was the "road." Yet the work of building these endless trails of rough blocks of stone was so great that it must have been done under a better government than China has to-day. In many places the earth had washed out from under the outside half of these crosswise stone slabs until they seemed to cling there chiefly by faith or habit, yet the narrow trails were made narrower by thorny bushes clutching at the passer-by. But no one ever did anything to improve them, though there was a constant stream of packhorses and laden and unladen coolies, unless he was absolutely forced to do something in order to pass himself, such as cutting back a bank where the path along it had fallen into the river below, and then he seemed to resent the help his work would be to other travelers. My horse always walked, of course, on the extreme outer edge even of mud-banks, where a foot went over now and then and where a fall

would often have meant a drop of from a hundred to a thousand feet. Hence that third day's incident might have had more serious consequences. For there was a drop of barely ten feet into a soft paddy-field where the beast chose to go over the edge that afternoon and I chanced to be walking behind him. Perhaps it was his former American master who had trained him always to pass on the right, though that is more common in Yünnan than in the rest of China, and fate had arranged that for all the thousand miles I rode and walked across southwestern China the trails were nearly always on the left-hand side of the mountains, so that the gelding's favorite edge was almost sure to be over the abyss. Twice afterward he went over, once down a bank at least thirty feet high, a great stone slab with him, and I on his back; but he seemed to lead a charmed life and was soon nonchalantly stumbling along the extreme edge again.

One of the advantages of getting coolies to do more than the regular stages is that then they cannot always stop at the noisy and filthy town that is sure to be the usual end of one. That third night we slept at a quiet spot called Ta Li Shu—Big Pear Tree, unless I got the tones wrong—in one of the best lodgings of the trip. The fourth night was still better. There was a single house, but the place had a geographical name for all that—Ching-kan-tzoeh. It was a big house for the region, built on both sides of the trail, with a roof across this connecting the two buildings, in one of which I got a polished-wooden-floored granary with only one wall, two other sides opening on the roaring little river below and on a great ribbon of waterfalls across the gorge, and the fourth on the main highway, in which my horses stood for the night. Yang and the coolies slept in the main part of the house across the narrow trail, made, as usual, of mud, with the family and its pigs and curs. The soldiers showed resentment at our stopping here, and went on to a town, where they fell in with us again late in the morning, though their orders were to protect me night and day until they had turned me over to duly appointed successors. After dark I had a fine soaping and ducking by lantern-light in the pure mountain stream, to the never-ceasing wonder of all the family and such coolies as heard of it for days afterward, who would not have done so wild a thing even in the daytime. To make matters still better the well-to-do householder jumped at the chance to buy at cost the foreign woolen blanket that had grown too thick, thereby again reducing the load. For it was hardly necessary even here, and I knew that by the next night I should not need it during the rest of my time in China.

One of my coolies was a *pei-fu*; that is, he carried his load on a big wooden framework on his back instead of at the ends of a flat pole across his shoulders. He was probably not yet thirty, but small-pox had ruined his face and put out one eye, as it so often does in China, and he had other good reasons to complain at life; yet his smile was never far below the gruesome surface, and a more cheery fellow I have never met in any clime. It had become more and more common to meet *pei-fu*—or, to drop the conventional spelling of those who so queerly romanized the Chinese tongue and write it as it sounds, *bay-fu*. More than one coolie carrying by pole, as is the custom in the more level and indeed nearly all parts of China, explained to me that it is an easy way because, as the load constantly bobs up and down, they are carrying it only half the time! Out here in the southwest, however, where China begins to roll up in the ever higher ranges that culminate in the mighty mountains of Tibet, where the steep trails are often laid in steps on which loads hanging low from the ends of poles strike and make that style of carrying almost impossible, most coolies *bay*, or carry on their backs. I met thousands, a thousand every day, I am sure, between Chaot'ung and the Yang Tze, of these fellows with the heavy wooden framework like a giant knapsack, curving clear up over their heads, like the runners of a dog-sledge, so that they can add still more to their incredible loads. There are many hard workers in China, but the *bay-fu* probably has the hardest task of all, with the possible exception of river trackers. Like turtles with their houses on their backs, they plod laboriously but steadily along these atrocious trails, their sleeping-mat, when they are wealthy enough to own one, forming a roof over the load high above their heads, so that they look like walking huts. In the sunshine they hang towels from the sides of this to shade their faces, with an opium-can, perhaps a tobacco-tin, and a fan—though no water-can—within reach, a cord running to the top of the load to control it, and in one hand a heavy crutch-like staff with an iron point, a load in itself, on which to rest their burdens from time to time.

I was assured by an American missionary that he had weighed *bay-fu* loads of 250 pounds, and that some men carry 300 pounds of brick-tea up into Tibet, but the most I can personally vouch for was a load of 218. The average back-load of an adult coolie, by no means so sturdy-looking as the average American man, is from 120 to 140 *chin* (160 to 200 pounds), including his heavy framework and staff. One day I met a boy of eight *bay-ing* forty pounds of rock

salt, besides his harness and personal extras, and keeping up with his father. The *bay-fu* cannot lift their loads; many cannot even budge them off the ground. But once they have been helped to their feet under them, they will march ten, twelve, sometimes fourteen hours a day, day after day, over more abominable mountain trails than probably could be found anywhere in the United States, up and down broken rocky stairways steeper than those built by man, at breathless elevations of eight, ten, even twelve thousand feet. Now and again during their twenty or more miles of daily toil they pause and take the weight partly off their shoulders for a moment by resting the back of the load on the grooved top of their crutch-staff, invariably whistling very solemnly as they do so—"to let out the bad vapors that would otherwise burst our lungs or give us tuberculosis." Under no circumstances do they omit the whistle, except when setting down the load entirely; long files of them, backing to the extreme edge of the trail, especially when meeting horses, of which they seemed not without reason to stand in considerable fear, whistled one after another like soldiers counting off. Even if the sudden sight of a foreigner astounded them out of it for the moment, they always whistled after the excitement had passed, with the same slow solemnity. They cannot get out from under their burdens without the help of others, except in the few places where there are rock ledges or level banks of just the right height, or the stout benches provided for them at most tea-houses bidding for their custom, to which they can back up and deposit their loads. If a *bay-fu* is knocked down a bank with his load he is likely to be killed; if he falls into the slime of a paddy-field he sometimes drowns before he can squirm his face out of the mud, unless there is some one about besides his own helpless fellows to help him.

All this brings me to the fourth day's incident, probably the most distressing one of my Chinese travels. A horse knocked a lone *bay-fu* off the outer edge of the road, his load striking him on the back of his head, while his forehead struck the stone edge of the trail. Had we not been near enough so that Yang and I could run to his assistance, he would probably have drowned, and as it was he was quickly covered with blood from head to foot, from terrific dents in front and back that must surely have broken his skull. Yet his fellows plodding past gave him little attention, as if this were merely one of the natural hazards of their calling; besides, there was no way for them to get from under their own loads. I gave him what medicine I had that could have been of any possible use, which was only a bottle of

iodine, and money to hire a substitute to the next town and pay a few inn-fees there; but though it was all I could do under the circumstances, I should be surprised to learn that he ever carried again.

For half that thousand miles across southwestern China we met endless files of these overburdened carriers straining their way up and down trails so narrow that when they met one of their fellows, or a whole train of them, they have to sidle past like passengers in the corridor of a European railway carriage, often balancing themselves and their loads over the sheer brinks of precipices. Two or three times a day they stop for a heaping bowl of boiled rice and some chopped vegetables, with possibly a sip of poor tea and probably a few minutes' drag at an opium-pipe. By night they lie down on hard earth or brick or stone, at best on the wooden platform which the Chinese mistake for a bed, often head to feet with some other coolie, so that two can share between them the rent of a ragged and usually inhabited quilt. Most of them sleep in the same sweaty rags worn by day; a few aristocrats have a change, though their own baggage rarely weighs a pound. Most of the *bay-fu* on this road carried rock-salt from the great salt-wells of Tzeliuching toward which we were heading; others had Szechuan tobacco in long wooden cylinders half as big as barrels. The first may not look like much of a load, until you try to lift it, when our greatest athlete would probably not offer to take the scrawny coolie's place in the sun. Most Tzeliuching salt is black, or at least very dark on the outside and dark-gray within, in contrast to the more or less white salt from wells to the west of Yünnanfu, with which it begins to compete at Tungch'uan, where both the white and the black are seen in the markets. The people, including most foreigners, say the black salt is better; it certainly is saltier; hence the price is higher. It was already not uncommon, here at four hundred miles from the wells, to meet several hundred men a day back-packing this blackish stuff, looking like chunks of flat rocks picked up along the way, but carefully protected by being more or less wrapped in straw, with a straw-mat roof to shield it from the rain. Some one with an eye to figures has concluded that the mere economic loss of shipping China's millions of freight-loads on men's backs or shoulders would pay for many railroads, and certainly a few hundred *bay-fu* convince one that transportation is a real product.

For this fine life the *bay-fu* are paid from twenty-five to thirty cents a day in our money, on days when they can make the regular stages of their fixed journeys; often they tramp back empty-handed.

Some of them got twisted out of shape by their incredible burdens, their heads permanently thrust forward at an angle by the projecting load, but they go right on; and though they seldom have excess energy enough to smile under their loads, these same *bay-fu* present to the outside world a much more constantly cheerful countenance than does the best paid workman or the most successful Wall Street broker in America. Many *bay-fu* look almost Arabian, as if it were rather the tribespeople or the Mohammedans who carry that way. One day I met a *bay-fu* with a goatee who looked so exactly like the most famous of our travel lecturers that I all but fell off my horse. The worst of it was I knew that gentleman had recently been in China, so that for one horrible moment I wondered if he could have been captured and set to work. As between *bay-ing* and *t'iao-ing* I think I should prefer the shoulder-pole method, even if the other is more nearly the style in which we of the West carry, on those play-days when we do so at all.

From my granary lodging we climbed for hours by zigzags through all but perpendicular corn-fields; not even the chamois can climb steeper hillsides than the fields of corn along this Yunnan trail. Maize grew wherever there was room for a single stalk; perhaps nothing typifies the struggle for existence in China more than the three or four stalks growing on the tops of bare boulders on which laboriously carried earth had been piled in order to plant them. Some of the mighty cliffs were cultivated on every little ledge; many slopes of far more than forty-five degrees were planted with this chief crop—potatoes had died out where the drop begins—and every little while a chunk of these steep patches falls into the river and is washed away. The farmer could not but have known that it would probably fall this year, but so great is his necessity for arable land that he takes the chance. Much corn was eaten on the cob, and children sucked the juice from the stalks as if they were sugar-cane. They eat anything, for that matter; yet in spite of all their arrangements to kill off children, if not adults—open wells, precipitous trails, utter absence of sanitation, cheap opium—the Chinese do not die fast enough, so that there were many more mouths than these stony, wall-like hillsides could feed properly. Many feet were not bound here; there were pigtails, but most of them inconspicuous, some cut off at the shoulders and not braided, as if they were kept merely out of personal vanity, or their wearers were prepared to change back to the old custom if it again became the mode. Here and there in the patchy

shade of a half-made shed an ox and a man marched forever round and round a circular stone trough in which a weighted stone wheel ground the rice or corn thrown into it by the handful.

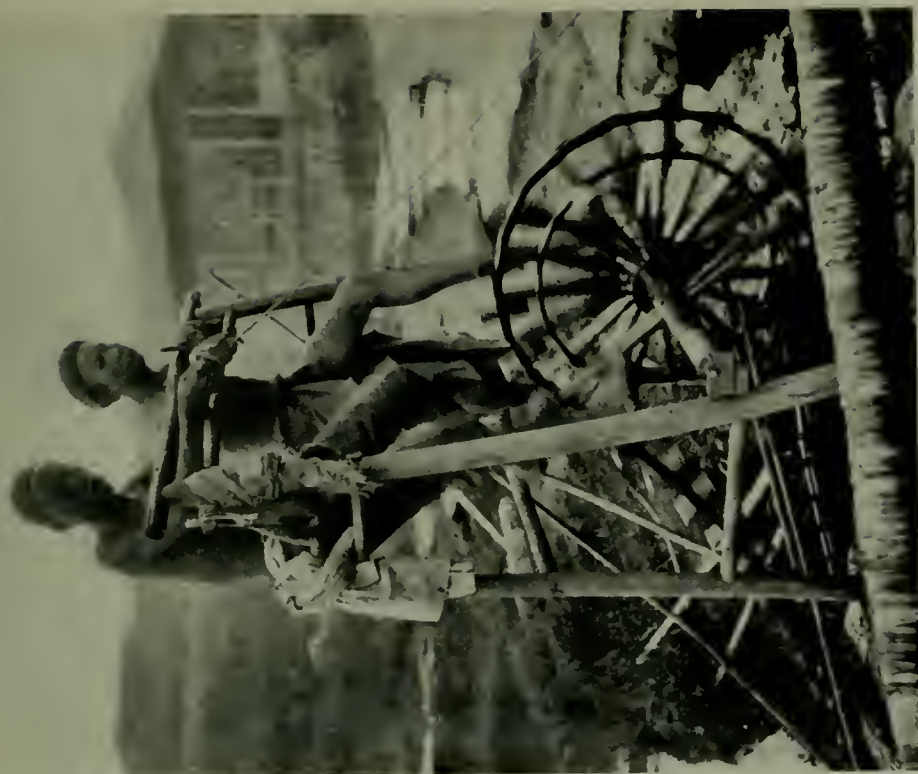
Day after day the narrow trail clambered along the sheer banks of the river like a burglar along the face of an iron-barred house. Recent storms had sent down great masses of broken boulders, the whole face of a cliff, but already the coolies under their incredible loads had picked a path across the steep débris. Sometimes the trail fought its way by stairways crudely cut in the native rock up the faces of precipices inclosing the river, often with mountain streams pouring down across it. Day by day—and night after night—the Huang Chiang we had picked up out of the clouds roared incessantly in our ears like a wild beast waiting below to swallow any unlucky wight who lost his footing, growing larger and larger, gradually fitting itself to join the mighty Yang Tze. It seemed a shame not to use the racing river, and perhaps a braver people than the Chinese could do so. Streams born in the clouds of somewhere else came in every little while through other mighty gorges to bring their tribute. The almost red water leaped and capered; new pure-white streams joined it at every little hollow—quickly turning to its color, like pure childhood turned into the stream of life—and raced away to—Shanghai; surely a sad end for so romantic a beginning! The more pious, or superstitiously fearful, travelers paused to kowtow or to light a stick of incense at gay-colored, though often faded, little mud gods in niche-shrines at unusually dangerous places along the way. There was scenery all the time of course; if the famous gorges of the Yang Tze should prove equal to the unknown cliffs at Teah-hsia-kuan I should be surprised. Here and there a bamboo rope thrown from shore to shore took the place of less precarious bridges for isolated hut-dwellers across the river, perhaps at the very foot of mighty mountain torrents. There were slippery miles along the ragged edge of a thousand-foot drop, with houses tucked away under the cliffs below. The roads were the most abominable *made* roads I have ever seen; in many places stones had simply been picked up along the river and thrown into the mud. *Lu* is translated “road,” but it merely means a way by which, with good luck, Lord willing, and in certain seasons, you may be able to struggle your way.

The trail was so constantly precipitous that I do not remember which day it was that we lunched at a monastery rice-shop completely hidden on the face of a gorge cliff, where one would not have sus-





My man Friday, Yang Chi-ting, exiting from one of the many houses built over the trail, on the ten-dollar stallion I bought to save his capable feet



Coolies pumping up water for use in the Tzulneching salt-wells, one of the brine-conduits of which appears in the lower foreground



Long trains of coolies carry immense buckets of water from near-by ponds and similar unsavory sources of supply to turn into brine the rock bottoms of the salt-wells, the derricks of which punctuate the sky line of the Tzuliuching region



Coolie hats of bamboo splints and leaves, widely used in southern China, are sold at about four cents each; hence the women who make them are not the highest paid of skilled laborers

pected any building at all, or have dreamed of the terrible miles of winding stairs sheer down to the river until one was upon them. It was bad enough to go down, yet there was a constant procession of *t'iao-fu* and *bay-fu*, carrying salt, tobacco, paper made of shaven bamboo, boys *bay-ing* loads of opium-pipes, forever straining up it. A photograph would have been impossible, even from an airplane, so crowded into the gorge was the well-to-do monastery and the little village pasted against the cliff below it, waterfalls from its eaves falling into the road. Lower still there were steps probably a thousand years old, with round holes that were eight inches deep by actual measurement worn by horses' feet in the solid rock. Yet this was not an unimportant mountain trail, but the principal and indeed only highway between the capitals of two great provinces, on which hundreds have passed almost every day for centuries.

A kind of apprentice-soldiers, boys in more or less uniform, with guns taller than they, were usually sent now. Two of these were walking near me on the fifth day, just after another set of protectors had taken their fee and turned me over to their successors. By this time we were so far down that they had shed all their upper garments except a cartridge-belt worn like the ribbon of the President of France. I stopped and sat down on a grassy knoll. I was aware of something unpleasant in the air, which must have been bad indeed, for even the soldiers noticed it, and coaxing me on a little way they showed me where a dead *bay-fu* had been half-buried just below the trail in a flimsy coffin full of cracks. Nor was that the only corpse of a fallen carrier that scented the air on that overland journey.

The most amusing feature of the trip was that the trail marched right through hundreds of houses built completely over it. The inhabitants were so crowded in by the cliffs and the steeply cultivated hillsides that there was no other place for them to build, nor any room to dry their corn except by spreading it out in the "road." There were steps up into and down from most dwellings, and nearly all of them were tea-houses, restaurants, or lodging-places, or all three combined, offering shade and refreshment to travelers. This would be pleasant as well as naïve, for it was cool and a relief to the sun-scorched eyes inside, with tables and sawhorse "chairs," had not the places always been overrun with pigs, chickens, unwashed brats, and everything else that the Chinese gathers about him, littering the already narrow passage. The pigs were tied by a string to one leg, lest they get something fit to eat—or fall to destruction down the hillside.

These houses not merely calmly take the trail inside but close their doors at night, so that traffic must stop, even if one is running for the doctor. In the same calm way the people used the road for any purpose; for is it not their property? Yet they were angry if one's horse got a bite of the grain set out in it to dry—though they never did anything beyond getting angry. It was hard enough to be constantly coaxing a horse not to step over a precipice, without always fighting to keep him from eating corn—or, farther down, rice—laid out to dry or hanging still in the stalk across the narrow trail. But few horses travel the lower part of this road, and the coolies seem never to touch the grain along the way.

Only twice during all that laborious week between where the Huang Chiang began and where I could use it did the trail leave the roaring river, the first time to climb a steep mountain spur through perpendicular corn-fields, at the top of which it squeezed its way under an old tree of curious shape before instantly pitching headlong down again. The view toward the north was marvelous. A score of ranges, all green at this distance, gave the earth the appearance of a vast boiling surface suddenly turned solid; it was as if every one of thousands of peaks was striving to outdo the others. Mighty hollows and gorges, the now small river far below, here and there white houses on low peaks, yet even these hardly accessible, terraced little perpendicular fields, clouds rising as steam from a kettle—most striking of all perhaps was the silence, and the relief from the incessant roar of the river and of waters forever pouring down from the heights to join it alone made the apparently unnecessary climb well worth while.

We quickly descended again, lower than ever, for to go down as fast as the river did took many stone stairs so steep that no one but a Chinese would have had the heart to ride horse or chairmen down them, or even to hurry unriden ones. By this time all coolies carried fans, numbers of which hung for sale before every hut, woven splints of bamboo made into diamond-shaped ones with a handle, for which they asked me a hundred "cash." One of my soldiers showed that he had my interest at heart by getting me one for fifty, thereby saving me nearly a cent. My entourage was shocked when I lost it only a day or two later and had to buy another.

Often a Chinese school of the old type opened directly, without front wall, upon the trail, so that we all but walked or rode through the shouting school-room—shouting at least until the half-asleep pupils

and the all-asleep teacher noted that a foreigner was passing and all tumbled out to gaze after him. As there was no record of another Westerner traveling this trail that summer, no wonder they showed surprise. Near the bottom of this great stairway there was a one-room hut containing a blacksmith-shop, a boys' school, and several opium-smokers lying on mats, surely theory and practice hand in hand. It was too dark within for photography, and I induced all except the opium-smokers to step out of doors, but the pedagogue's pride of caste was rather hurt when I insisted on including in the picture the goatskin-aproned blacksmith, for of course scholarly attainments count for more with the backward Chinese than mere brawn. The blacksmith who adds a few "cash" a day to his meager income by offering for sale to passers-by *dough-fu*, or soggy bean-curd cakes, or even opium and the mats on an earth floor that go with it, is not unusual, but scholar and coolie are far apart, even if they live together and look much alike.

We came at length to Lao-wa-t'an—as the Yünnanese call it; what they mean in correct mandarin is Lao-ya-t'an, Old Crow Rapids, if you must have the meaning of everything as well as purity of language. We were a day and a half ahead of the regular schedule, and by this time low enough so that it was melting hot and we were constantly drenched, in sweat, even though the rains had all given way to brilliant skies in contradiction of pessimistic prophecies in Yünnanfu. Normally horse-carried loads going north are changed here to coolies' backs, and vice versa; horses are in fact unloaded before crossing the large bridge over the now respectable river rushing well below, and in consequence it was in such bad repair that even our goat-footed animals crossed it with misgiving. I had heard that I would almost have to give my horses away here and hire a chair or walk. While I rarely saw a horse below, and the people were not prepared to house them, to say nothing of being scared to death of them, we found no great difficulty, a foreigner not being subject to annoyance by the coolie guild, and the Chinese seeing no reason why a horse should not stay in the same house with a man if he can afford it. Corn and rice, occasionally other grain, were to be had either in the ear or freshly cut to order.

Lao-wa-t'an was a big place, its suburbs running up various small valleys, and with one very long street a little back from the river that might have been picked up intact from the heart of some great compact Chinese city. As usual no decent use was made of the waterfront. Along the narrow, sweltering, densely jostling lane through

which the trail fought its way women *bay*-ed rock-salt, their dirty breasts hanging outside their clothing—creatures as far from our own dear ladies as two branches of the human family can get. Baskets of what looked like excellent anthracite coal were back-packed from somewhere to the east, and heavy loads of brown paper came in constantly from a town not far away. All this is made into half-cut false “cash”—worthless stuff, yet many coolies clamber over the hills all their lives with great burdens of it, and in every town of importance men and boys stand striking out reams of it with a chisel-punch and a wooden mallet on a great upright block of wood like a huge stump. The haughty chief authority of the place was attending the special theatrical performance in full swing in a temple-theater we passed at high noon, the magistrate like a pistil in the center of his petal-colored body-guard filling a box behind and above the densely massed main audience on foot. He must have been on the job even while enjoying histrionic pleasures, however, for when we had put in two sweating hours feeding ourselves and the horses in a tea-house where four-footed animals are rarely served, he had the usual four near-soldiers ready to go on with us.

The half-day below Lao-wa-t'an was by a terrible stone road of steps on the very brink of the river, barely horse-width along often sheer cliffs, mammoth rocks ready to drop at a moment's notice, as they plainly had before, with one sharp climb to the top of a range and down again. If the horses had not been circus performers, the impression that they could not go beyond here would have been only too true. Once my carriers crossed a suspension-bridge of which the flooring had been allowed to fall into such disrepair that we were forced to swim our animals across the precipitous-sided stream far below that might easily have swept them away. As the main river broadened in its raging haste to join the Yang Tze, the vegetation along the trail became ever more tropical, now masking the dangerous brink of the narrow road, in time all but covering the poorly flagstoned way; palm-trees, lianas, creepers appeared; the corn, until now barely a foot high, suddenly took on ears. Then rice began, wherever terraces could be built that would hold water, though corn continued, the two crops dovetailing. My horse showed a constant desire to step on the unsupported edge of the stone slabs and go over the precipice, and sometimes succeeded. Riding a horse on this trail was closely akin to tight-rope walking; I do not mind some danger to add spice to life, but in time one grows tired of the sensation of having the heart

in the mouth incessantly day after day. In the afternoon we passed the large, or at least long, town of Pu-ehr-tong, among the largest rocks in captivity, and stopped that night at poetically named Pan-pan-shih, our last town in Yünnan.

The seventh day was perfectly tropical, though with the same mountain-flanking rocky road, and was marked by the change from one province to another. At T'an-t'ou (Head of the Rapids) our four soldiers were replaced by two others, but we did not see much of them. For we climbed a steep hill away from the river, and I coaxed Yang and the men on until we reached a new inn at what seemed to be a new town, and upon inquiry I found that I had passed at last from Yünnan to Szechuan, from the province of South of the Clouds to that of the Four Rivers. I found also that the two Yünnan soldiers had left me, without a good-by, nay, even without a tip, because we would not go by the *hsiao lu*, the "little road," so that they could get to the town beyond the frontier where they had been ordered to turn my protection over to Szechuan, though they had admitted that horses could not go that way. So long as I was out of their jurisdiction it did not matter to any one in Yünnan what became of me; besides, perhaps the North and the South resented the necessity of meeting. I was well rid of them at any rate, and never had another private guard in China, though I probably went through more dangerous places than in Yünnan, the province that insisted on protecting me. I had foreseen heavy expenditure for such protection; thanks mainly to the unimportance the authorities so justly attached to me, not to mention the low state of Yünnan currency, the total cost, in tips to soldiers, had been—almost four American dollars! It was cheaper than paying taxes at home.

We had come to a new money, by the way, though our silver still passed; that is, the good pieces of it did, for I found that the French bank at Yünnanfu, with its Annamese clerks, had given me a certain percentage of coins that were perfect duds, and the others were of less value outside their home province. Like emigrants underpaid at home, all the full-weight-and-value silver half-dollars of Yünnan were working over here in Szechuan, where the money is about on a par with "Mex" in the rest of the country, though the province makes its own silver dollar. Coppers and "cash" also changed at a different rate, in the main growing more for the dollar as we neared the capital of the new province. It is bad enough to have to change money at every

international frontier, but in China it is many times worse than that. Yet though hers is an utterly disorganized currency, it is not a debased, often not even a depreciated one, so that at its worst it is superior to that of much of present-day Europe. Sometimes, too, the happy traveler finds he is the gainer rather than the loser. Canton twenty-cent pieces, selling at about six to the dollar at home, where they are made in abundance and of poor silver, here passed at par. My only regret was that I chanced to have barely forty dollars' worth of them.

The first little town in the new province seemed to have a four-character name which I should gain nothing by trying to perpetuate, and it was full of blue-clad soldiers of the *pao-shan-toeh*, the more or less official guards of merchants' supply-trains. They were friendly, like those I had left behind, though more saucy than the coolies and country people; and there was little or nothing to show that I had passed from the South to the North, from the "Rebels" to the "Yanks," so to speak. It was a welcome Sunday evening—toward the end of the day I remembered that it was Sunday in those lands where weeks exist—for it was surprising how much cooler the air was this few hundred feet up than down in the narrow river valley, and it was a relief to sleep without the roar of racing waters in my ears, even if the new roof leaked and made a mud-hole of what I thought was a good room.

I suppose it was proof of the superior morality of the North that we saw signs of reform on our first day in Szechuan. We had stopped for lunch at a little cluster of huts roofing over the road, where a dozen coolies were noisily playing dice in a cracked tea-cup. Suddenly a petty official passed in a chair, and though neither he nor the players gave any sign of noting each other's existence, he dropped a word to one of the soldiers half-trotting behind him, who snatched up the dice in one hand and kept right on trotting after his master with the other—or at least holding the gun with which he would no doubt die or protect him. The coolies looked rather foolish for a moment or two, as the Chinese do when they lose face; then some one fished out another pair of dice, and the Chinese form of "Seben come eleben!" went on as loudly and vehemently as ever. Opium-smoking, too, was somewhat less public than in the free and open province behind us.

The forever flagstoned trail wound erratically through low hills diligently and marvelously and expertly terraced in all shapes for the now fresh green rice. I reached the large walled town of Huang



Chiang so early in the afternoon that but for the fact that the Chinese never do two things at once we could have jumped into a boat and been down in Suifu that evening. Not since leaving Chaot'ung had we been in so large and compact a town, and Huang Chiang was not used to horses, so there was considerable excitement on both sides when we went down through the crowded streets to the boats, only to find that no one would start so late in the day. I called on the Catholic priest, the "Jesus church" being conspicuous on a hill just outside the gate we entered, and found him Chinese but true to type, offering home-made wine and cigars, even unconsciously copying the French fathers, just as Chinese Protestant pastors take their manners from the Americans or British. But as he did not offer a space in his compound, I took the horses out to graze while Yang went to look for accommodations. He finally came to lead me and the coolies, who had just arrived, to a big family temple on a crowded street, which seemed to be also a kind of high-class wholesale shop. The horses got lodgings in the courtyard, I in the main temple room, but I was asked not to sleep before the altar. The place was full of coffins and of various tables and benches, and about the time I got ready my mosquito-netted bed, the net now very necessary, a man came in and beat the temple drum and cymbals and lighted incense-sticks before the ancestors who were sharing their lodging with me. I never got over being amused to see how solemnly the matter-of-fact Chinese go through this hocus-pocus, showing none of that sense of the ridiculous which they have for most things in life. The usual crowd came to look me over, but it was in a way a select crowd, for this family was evidently of importance. When Yang brought in the usual wooden tub, in which I stood while I bathed from the hot water in my own basin, they drifted away, which showed that the family had admitted only those of their own more sophisticated class.

Foresight is needed for travel in China as in anything else, and I had avoided the almost certain chance of being grossly overcharged, with probable squeeze to all my coolies if not to Yang himself, by arranging at Chaot'ung that I should not have to take to the boats at Huang Chiang unless the price was right. It would take two days by trail, at a cost of six Yünnan dollars for the three men, something more to feed the horses, and a bit of inn-money. I really had no intention of going by land unless the boatman proved wholly unreasonable, but this threat enabled me to drive a fair bargain, with help even from the coolies, who seemed to have found a chance to carry

rock-salt back to Chaot'ung, and were eager to be off back up the eight-day hill again. No one expects entirely to escape being cheated in China, however, and the "big boat" for ourselves and the horses we had agreed upon at twelve Yünnan dollars turned out to be so small that I was not at all sure of the wisdom of embarking the animals in it—nor indeed were they. Much of the population came down to see us off with advice and even an occasional helping hand; there were a few soldiers with the air of seeing whether I was worth letting the bandits know that I was coming. From a garbage-bank down below the backs of the most crowded business street of the town, the horses were at length coaxed into the boat, in the center of which I reclined under a curved roof, the boards in the bottom so loose and scanty that the horses, their heads out over the water, had a time adjusting themselves. Especially the Kweichow pony, though he made no bones of climbing stairways, did not care for risking himself on an element which he knew only as his servant and not as his master. Then of course the *likin* men thought they would get a bit of squeeze out of the simple foreigner and sent an old man down to imply that he had a right to look through my belongings and charge me a little for the service even if he did not demand a local tax; but when he found I knew that the baggage of foreigners is neither subject to search nor to *likin*, he bluffed long enough to save his face before the crowd on the garbaged shore and told the boatmen they could go—and before you could say Tuan Chi-jui the compact town of Huang Chiang with its wall and a few higher points was speeding rapidly into the past.

That boat trip was doubly uncanny. The river had a terrific speed compared to the trail along which we had laboriously toiled for weeks, and it was silent. Yang got me a hasty breakfast, I winked and perhaps sneezed once or twice, and there we were at Anpien, where the now great branch we had picked up out of the clouds a week before dashed suddenly out into the still swifter Yang Tze just where this gathers itself together after wandering in a vast circle south and north about the land of the independent "Lolos," and starts definitely eastward on the 1700-mile journey to join the sea near commonplace Shanghai. I presently realized that a river is noisy only when you are on its bank hearing it tear past, not when you are tearing past with it, so that the silence with which the crude native boat whisked us downward was so striking that it was almost fearsome. Perhaps it was partly this that made the horses, above all the country

Jake from Kweichow, gaze first in fear, then in awe, and finally in contentment at the landscape and the hard trail speeding southward without the least effort from them, and fall to munching the big bundle of *chin-tsao* I had insisted on providing for them.

But for three *likin* stations at which the boatmen had to stop to prove that they had only a foreigner and his belongings on board, and the fact that they thought it best to take the horses overland for a couple of miles rather than risk them in some rapids on the Son of the Sea itself, abetted by the natural Chinese lack of haste and inability to dovetail operations, we could easily have done in three hours that 140 *li* from Huang Chiang down to Suifu, which takes two hard days by trail. The Golden Sands is hardly navigable above Anpien—which is pronounced Ngan-bien. We saw a number of boats loaded to the gunwales with men and women come shooting down it at incredible speed, but these were a kind of ferry from not far away to the walled town on the flat northern bank, which later in the summer was to suffer greatly from still higher water.

At the place where we waited for the horses two boats anchored along the shore sounded as if they were operated by gas-engines, which was so impossible that I went aboard one across a precarious plank and found they were grist-mills. Wheat and no doubt rice and corn and other grains are made into flour here, a side-wheel run by the river turning the millstones, so that the noise was not of an engine but of a sifter on which a man danced back and forth so incessantly and regularly that it closely resembled the exhaust of a gas-engine. The animals were in time coaxed back into the frail boat, and we soon shot into sight of Suifu, landing well above the town. It had not been much work for twelve dollars, but the toil was still to come, in tracking the boat back to Huang Chiang. Strolling on to the mission hospital, I found that the doctor, almost the only foreigner in town at this sweltering season, was not only the first fellow-countryman I had seen since leaving Yünnanfu, but another fellow university graduate.

## CHAPTER XXI

### SZECHUAN TRAILS IN MIDSUMMER

THE end of July in Suifu, at just enough elevation above sea-level to make the Yang Tze flow fairly rapidly in its middle reaches, is not cool, so the doctor, who spends every other day of his summer vacation down at the hospital in the sweltering city, suggested that I go with him up the hill across the river and stay until he came down again the second morning thereafter. The compound of another American missionary, who was then playing scientist in the interior, was so full of grass that it needed more than my two horses to replace the lawn-mowers that do not come so far up country. I left Yang and the horses, and we were rowed and swept across and far down the river through several mighty mounds of water in whirlpools where a day or two before another American had gone down, only to come calmly up again and regain his boat and a book he had been reading, though he did not regain one coolie and some laundry. Then came a climb among rice-fields past a few tiny villages where every one seemed to know the doctor, and at last a cluster of several foreign summer-houses, with all the comforts of home—and some others, such as plenty of good cheap servants.

Suifu, like every other important town on the upper Yang Tze, and indeed most Chinese river cities, is built in the sharp peninsula of land between the great river and one of its many tributaries, such as are always coming down from the hills somewhere to add to its mightiness, like dutiful sons. In fact, the tributary here, called the Min, is more important than the Yang Tze above Suifu: there is a large city on it, and it is the water-route to, or at least from, Chengtu, while there is little up the Yang Tze. Suifu's perhaps 100,000 people live compactly together on this tongue of land. Especially from the old white pagoda across the Min, of which some miraculous tales are told, and which, with the half-ruined black one beyond the main river, preserves the *feng-shui* or prevents evil spirits from harming the city, one sees what a compact place it is, with an irregular rectangular wall leaving little room for the usual row of streets down along the

garbage-covered waterfront, and with perhaps more population outside the city walls than within them. The city itself is a flat mass of black tile roofs, but there are many hills about, walks and views and temples and graves and hilltops, all interesting unless you are already quite familiar with most things and customs and sights Chinese. The crowded streets of this highest treaty-port on the Yang-Tze, to which many steamers come when the water is not too low, are busy streets, some of them well paved in flagstones, with many native industries, such as the making of wire by melting up old brass, cutting it in strips half an inch wide, and pulling these through holes down to any size. One of the advantages of China is that one can see most of our factory processes in their infancy, so to speak, and find how many simple everyday things are made, of which one had only the haziest of notions before. The traveler gets so used to Chinese ways after two years in the country that he hardly notices the charms or devil-chasers over the doors, unless they have something out of the normal about them, such as the wooden butter-flapper in Suifu, which, as butter is not Chinese, one might suspect came down from Tibet. A gay demon face is painted on the flapper, which is hung handle down above the doors of most Suifu houses to scare off the devils. In one temple, still left by the soldiers, there was a big chicken-footed god with a terrific chicken face and a generally chicken appearance, perhaps a chicken heart. Great bundles of chicken bones were hung up in front of him by grateful followers, also bundles of old *tsao-hai* as thank-offerings for cured feet. There is no one like the Chinese; these gifts they would only have been able to throw aside along the trail anyway. The chicken-god and all but one of his dozen companions that lined the entrance to the sanctum of the temple had their lips smeared with real opium, blackish stuff with a brownish tinge driveling down their chins and fronts, that made the faces look like those of children smeared with jam. Even one of the wives of another low-caste god had her face and that of the child on her back daubed with this precious but there inexpensive appeal to their favor and good will. It was typical of the point of view even of the coolie that one of the gods, a scholar among the others, had never been offered this form of bribe, his character being supposedly above it.

The Suifu city wall is unusual in that all the top of it is built into a narrow street much like those down below, often roofed over entirely. This, no doubt, is the opposite form of progress from that of Canton, where they are tearing the wall down and putting a wide street in its

place. Here the usually airy promenade is lined almost all the way around with hovel-homes as well as shops, even a theater, the very narrow covered alley between them and the outer parapets congested with dirty children, chickens, pigs, scavenging curs, and water-carriers slopping the wall-top street just as they do those down below. New buildings were still going up, and here and there the wall had been cut down to make ramps for the workmen. It was a new experience to walk the circuit of the city wall and be in imagination down in the crowded city streets below, sometimes forgetting entirely where one was until one came out upon a view, or until the superstructure of a city gate, filled with ragged soldiers and beggars, cut one off.

We were away on the 660 *li* journey from Suifu to Chengtu soon after August dawned. As we hoped to get back to Suifu, and there was no use of unnecessarily tempting the bandits who were said to swarm on the last part of the trip to the Szechuan capital, Yang and I had reduced our baggage to two not very heavily laden coolies. These, recruited for me by the American missionaries, really did not seem to smoke opium, but before the end of the journey I wished one of them had, for he fell ill before that first day was over and was a great trial all the trip. The coolie-boss had been a woman this time, but the price was the same as before, a dollar a day each and a tip at the end if they were good; but they were more expensive for all that, since money had come back to "Mex" in value. People who live in western China say money wages are eight times what they were in 1900, but that the coolies are worse off than ever. Beyond the town on the other side of the Min where the coolies and Yang had to have breakfast we picked up something I had not yet seen in China,—an almost brand-new flagstone road. But even this was made like the old roads built centuries ago; the granite slabs three feet long and half as wide or narrower, fairly well fitted together and with seldom a break, but constantly winding in and out and up and down, on every provocation and many times on none whatever, as devious as the Chinese mind, so that we covered easily twice the distance necessary. This constant meandering is mainly to save trespassing on the precious fields, though it is partly to avoid grades. The country was hilly and the weather red-hot, but the new road was so smooth that the coolies could trot almost all the way, and we made splendid time, leaving town after village behind us. The country was fertile and tightly planted, so that the road was densely lined with

grass or crops of rice, *kaoliang*, beans, corn, reaching out into the trail and tempting the most honest horse beyond endurance, so that if I had not been firm we might have spent nothing for fodder. We had heard that horses could not travel this road, but that turned out to be chairman propaganda. But as we were following no main stream now, and the animals could not reach the water in the rice-fields, they suffered more from thirst than hunger. The coolies were more fortunate. Here and there some merit-acquiring Buddhist had put up a stone trough in which cold tea, or some cheaper leaf concoction, was to be had for a mere flip of the bamboo dippers on handles lying beside them.

Pleasing as it may be to our oil trust, it was not pleasant to the traveler to meet a man *t'iao*-ing a score of empty oil-cans over one of these roads, for he and the horse could hardly pass, and it is not an agreeable experience to knock a heavily laden carrier into the flooded fields or down a bank. There were still many *bay-fu* with rock-salt, but not so many as north of the river, because much is sent down to the Yang Tze in boats. Sedan-chairs or humbler members of that family had become numerous before we reached Suifu, but here they were still more so, especially what the Chinese, at least of the southwest, call a *hwa-gan*. This is one of the simplest forms of vehicle in the world,—two bamboo poles ten feet long and three inches in diameter with a stick connecting them at either end, keeping them some eighteen inches apart, and in the middle two boards, a foot and six inches wide respectively, hanging down at unequal distances from the poles by pieces of rope or of its native equivalent at either end of them. The wider board is the seat and the narrower and lower the foot-rest, comfortable enough for Chinese travelers and giving the carriers almost nothing to carry except the passenger, and the baggage which in most cases he insists on including in the load, often spreading his bedding in the form of an arm-chair. It is not a modest conveyance for foreign ladies who insist on wearing the usual summer garb of the West, but it works very well for the Chinese. Having bound feet, the few women or girls who have to travel the hard trails of southwest China must be carried like loads of salt. Long lines of male *hwa-gan* travelers coming down or up a hill, almost all asleep, mouths open, their heads wabbling back and forth, that peculiar sickly-yellow of the Chinese face emphasized in the sunshine, their feet over the two bars, and usually naked to the waist, they suggested nothing so much as rather over-ripe corpses being carried away somewhere.

That night I slept on the stage of a temple, strangely enough not taken by soldiers, in a crowded Szechuan town among rice-fields, the horses down below and Yang cooking in a back room where the caretaker priest lived. While the crowd could marvel at me from the stone-paved parquet as I put up my bed and did other strange foreign things, none of them came up. The town round about was noisy, and many bums and beggars slept in the temple court and the side rooms like boxes about it, and it was midnight before, even with a cold poured bath, I really quit sweating.

Having done so well the first day, we rather hoped to get to the great salt-well city of Tzeliuching on the second, and probably would have done so but for the sick coolie. Though it was the longest and hottest day I had so far had, thirty-six miles of hilly stone road through several large towns, I pushed on into the dusk up a great hill, where the people warned us not to stop for the night until we reached a village. The rule of the road in China is to go on ahead and expect your coolies to follow whether they want to or not. Wait for them, and they are slow; the surest way to get them to stop sooner than you want them to is keep behind them or not far ahead. Like animals, they cannot keep going on their own nerve alone. So I went on, hoping until the last to get to Tzeliuching and a foreign house. But for the second and last time during all my travels in China one of my *t'iao-fu* did not get in that second night out of Suifu. This would not have mattered much, for even though he had the two boxes with most of my valuables, the other and by no means so sturdy-looking man had the bed and the "kitchen," which was all I needed for the night. But that morning I had foolishly put my pajamas and mosquito-net in one of the boxes. We stopped at dark only a few miles short of the salt-wells in a dirty little village, but there was a wide space under a huge tree before a little old half-ruined temple, where I put up my cot and ate, and but for the crowd it was hard to drive away, all would have been well if a thunder-storm had not come up and driven us into the temple. The roof leaked badly, but I finally found a place on the hard, uneven earth floor where I would not get very wet. Then the mosquitos began, driven in by the rain too, no doubt, and they certainly made the night miserable. Here in the lowlands, where it was probably too hot for them, there were few flies compared to the swarms in the highlands of Yünnan, but the mosquitos made up for them.

There were many rumors of bandits and robbers, so I thought the



house was pinched when a dozen tough-looking young fellows burst running into the wide-open temple just after I had taken to my cot. They all had guns and very little uniform, but they turned out to be soldiers fleeing before the storm and soon went on to some other lodging. Before morning I wished many times that they had been bandits and had carried me off for ransom, for perhaps a night hurrying with them would have spared me the mosquitos. I have seldom been so nearly devoured by them, and at dawn I discovered to my dismay that they were all the zebra-striped kind that stand on their heads as they eat, and carry malaria—or is it yellow fever? There were many pallid wrecks of people in those parts and, what with the weary feeling left by the longest day on the road and a night of tossing and no sleep, I thought the old enemy had overtaken me already. But the handful of quinine I swallowed evidently did its duty, for no misfortune came.

The missing man did not appear in the morning. If he had been robbed the thing to do was to get to the important town just ahead and report it, and if he had not been, the chances were that he would turn up in due season. I left Yang behind and went on alone. Though it was not the rainy season in Szechuan, the thunder-storm of the night had cooled things off, and the weather was pleasant nearly all the rest of the way to the capital. By the end of the second day the landscape had grown rolling; now it became more so, and soon crude derricks began to rise on the horizon and gave it the appearance of our oil-fields. Standing out against the sky backed by plump hills, Tzeliuching, famous throughout China for its great salt-wells, appeared a town surprisingly large, in extent at least, scattered among several hollows in the hills, compact on either side of a small river down which goes much salt. A new bridge being built with fine arches was suggestive of modern progress, but the usual narrow railless stone one, just like the road through paddy-fields, even to the ruts worn in it by countless bare or straw-sandaled coolie feet, and with stone heads of animals on each side of every abutment, meant to hold the missing rail, carried me into the main city. The Canadian missionaries I had been told to call upon being off at a summer resort in the hills, I put up with the Russian salt commissioner in his comfortable foreign house on a high hilltop overlooking all the town.

I liked the commissioner's house better for a change, if only because a cigar was not looked upon there as a crime. Nor have I ever traveled in greater state in China than in the official four-man chair in which

the commissioner sent me out to look the town over. It was not, I found, merely because it was Sunday that the place was so dead; the work of salt selling, distribution, and sending out by coolies and boats is all done before noon, so that Tzeliuching is always a very quiet city in the afternoon. It is naturally a quiet town anyway, for there are no mines but only wells, hence no noisy engines, belching smoke upon the landscape. Everything is crude and primitive as it was centuries ago. While a very few salt-well men have introduced engines and steel cables, which of course rust badly, the great majority of the wells consisted of large stable-like structures of mud, in which many coolies and water-buffaloes eating their food were dimly seen.

The origin of the salt-wells of Tzeliuching is lost in legend. It is strange that the Chinese dared affront the earth-dragon and dig so deeply into the ground, for many of the wells go down four thousand feet; but as no one goes down into them, perhaps there is not the same danger as most Chinese still see in mining. It would take pages to describe the chisels and other tools of all shapes with which from time immemorial the Chinese have dug these wells, hardly a foot in diameter. The woven ropes of bamboo splints, looking exactly like steel cables until you examine them closely, are of course longer than the wells are deep. Each rope is wound around a big clumsy wooden drum at the top of the well inside the buildings above which the derricks rise, and has at the lower end a very long bamboo, evidently several times longer than the original tree, though I could not make out any joints, and with a valve in the bottom. Half a dozen water-buffaloes march forever around this drum, the teams changed often but rarely getting outside the building. At last the bamboo on the end of the rope emerges and is drawn to the high top of the structure. A coolie deftly opens the valve as the bottom appears, and with a great hissing the salt brine rushes out and flows away by pipes made of ratan-wrapped bamboo, to be boiled down into the blackish salt rocks we had seen thousands of coolies carrying southward. Derricks stick out of houses, rise in the hollows, on the sky-line of distant ridges, dot all the landscape for miles around. They are made of poles like those we use for the telegraph, a dozen of them together to form each pile or leg of the derrick, several one above another, tied with ropes of bamboo splints, with many wooden wedges driven in to keep them taut.

Many men get rich from the salt of the Tzeliuching region, and the wealthier merchants live in a small walled town on the top of a high hill



Szechuan is in many ways the most picturesque and scenically beautiful province of China, and this particular flagstone road is none the less typical for being newly rebuilt



This is what often happens to the Chinese coolie who carries too many heavy loads, though he goes on carrying as if nothing had happened



Pleasing as it may be to our great oil corporation, it is no sport to meet a long train of such loads as this on a narrow trail along a precipice

some distance away. Salt has been a government monopoly in China for hundreds of years, and one of its richest sources of revenue. The salt gabelle produced \$85,000,000 "Mex" revenue in 1922 and \$80,000,000 in 1923, which probably does not mean that China ate less salt, but that there was more smuggling and fund snatching. It was not until this century that, like the customs service and the post-office, salt was put in the hands of foreigners. Nor is it the same, for the two older services in the order named are earmarked for foreign loans, while salt revenues are less so. These are also supposed to go to Peking, but they are almost all taken by the local military in all parts of China, and the foreign salt men give them up as fast as they get them, and sometimes even advance their own salaries or savings to the grasping militarists, merely issuing a formal protest. Peking told one salt man of Szechuan to protest once a week, and every Monday he calls on the general, says he has come to protest, drinks tea and has a social chat, and goes home again.

By this time Yang was in "foreign" territory, and one of the first questions his fellows always asked him, as soon as they had heard a few words of his dialect, was, "Where do you come from?" We now had the amusing Szechuan dialect all about us, in which "h" becomes "f" and "n" becomes "l," and a man says *laitze* for milk, when he means *naitze*, and Fulan when he means Hunan. I had often been mobbed in China, but never in all my travels do I remember a larger mob gathering about me than under that stage just off the main street and highway back of an open square in the noonday town beyond the salt-wells, nor a better-natured one, for nothing was easier than to get them laughing uproariously at the simplest jokes. Now and then when I could not get my breath because of the open-mouthed human wall about me, I would give three warnings and then throw the remnants of a cup of tea at them, and there would be a terrific scurrying back, followed quickly by a roar of laughter—and it would be two or three minutes before they would crowd up so closely again.

Every traveler off the beaten track in foreign lands, where he does not speak the language or speaks it imperfectly, has been troubled by people who think that because he does not catch their words at the first rapid fire of them, it is his ears instead of his understanding that is at fault, and who therefore shout louder and louder. I began to have more of this in Szechuan because the dialect, especially of the coolie class north of the Yang Tze, is if anything less like the mandarin of Peking

than that of Yünnan, and sometimes I had to call Yang in and have him "interpret" into his own slow and well-enunciated Chinese, whereupon the matter became as clear as scandal seen through a plate-glass window, for there were few things Yang ever said in my hearing which I did not understand. But now and then I got more than an earful from some individual who thought he was being kind to my physical infirmities. In China I found that an almost unfailing recipe for that custom is to walk up to the speaker, put the lips as close to his unwashed ear as a certain finickiness permits, and filling the lungs to their full, remark in the most stentorian tones at one's command, "The hell you say!" or words of similar import. This not only instantly relieves your own auditory system of its torture, as the speaker hastily recedes rubbing his own ear, but it brings down the house with a roar from every one within seeing and hearing. Furthermore, as the Chinese not only have a sense of humor but are quick to catch an idea, the word will spread before you for some distance that the foreigner's ears are all right, whatever other qualities he may lack.

The road from Tzeliuching northward was less traveled, though the stones were worn deep by countless bare or straw-clad coolie feet. Evidently not so much salt went north, that region being no doubt supplied from other wells that can send their product down small rivers, so that while the road between the salt-wells and Suifu was important and so much traveled that it had worn out entirely and been replaced by a new one, the winding broken flagstone trail to the north was still used. But it was almost level, and after Yünnan it seemed like a sidewalk. A thunder-storm gave us a late start on the second day beyond the salt-wells, so that, though Yang and I pushed on to Tzuchow and had crossed the big river into the town by two in the afternoon, the coolies were so slow that I decided to stay there for the night. The several foreign missionaries who run a big school and hospital just outside the town, and a big chapel inside the walls, were in the hills for the summer, but there was a Chinese graduate of an American university out at the big compound, where grass for the horses was unlimited, and after a bath I found an ideal sleeping-place for a hot night on the broad veranda of the big stone and brick building in which American girl nurses lived like queens—when they were there.

Two or three hours before Tzuchow, sugar-cane, which I saw growing for the first time in China, began to comb many a hillside with its delicate green. Coal from thirty miles to the westward came down to the city by boats, for Tzuchow is on a large river, though it looks on

our maps like a tiny tributary of the Yang Tze. The outer wall of the city crawls along the river brink and climbs steeply up the hills behind the compact old town, an important station on an ancient overland route; for it is here that the trail from Yünnan joins the still more important one from Chungking to Chengtu, still four days off. Just then the route from Chungking to the capital was almost given up, for at one place in particular bandits controlled it almost absolutely and levied tribute or worse on any one so foolhardy as to use it. I did not know this until I reached Szechuan, and it made no difference to me, since I had no desire to follow so well-known a route, and would see enough of it in the four days left from Tzuchow to the capital. There were rumors enough of highway robberies and banditry on that part of the road that was left, especially on the last stage or two into the capital, to save the trip from monotony.

If there was any improvement now that I was on the "big road," it was all in the *p'ai-lou*, great stone or marble arches that straddled it. Szechuan probably has more *p'ai-lou*, often very elaborate ones, than any other province. Sometimes they are very artistic, but there are times, while one's feet or those of one's horse are skidding over the rain-slippery broken and missing flagstone trails beneath them, when one wishes more had been spent on the roads and less on the arches. The same thing held true where we crawled along the edge of a river and found immense boulder walls carved with sacred characters each larger than a man, the most conspicuous of which some Chinese scholar translated for me later as "*Lung hang ho sha*," or "Dragon crawling most noble bird shape of wing," which is about as near as our simple Western minds get to the sacred texts carved on the rocks of China.

Foreigner residents as well as the Chinese themselves are often proud of their localities, and those who are loyal to Szechuan insist that it is the most picturesque as well as the richest province in China. They may be right, though I would hardly give the palm to such of its scenery as I saw over that of mountainous Yünnan and Kweichow. There were magnificent rolling hills, pyramidal peaks like cone-shaped snail-shells, both natural and terraced by man, a country-side intensively cultivated, often fuzzy with the thick atmosphere which adds to the beauty of Szechuan, though it makes the photographer swear, by giving the landscape that haziness which makes it much more beautiful than in the glaring light of a bright day; the whitish, narrow flagstone road meanders ceaselessly over level or rolling country, even over hills

or mountains, like a slight but distinct crack in a great green pane of glass. Yes, one admits before leaving it that China's richest province is also in many ways one of the most picturesque and scenically beautiful.

It is only about three hundred years since the Chinese began moving in any number into the province of the Four Rivers. Now almost all have been there at least three or four generations, yet it is a rare man who will admit that he is a Szechuanese. Those who are in the government service get extra "frontier" pay, and of course they wish to remain "foreigners," while in many parts of the country the old idea of Szechuan as a "barbarian" country persists. True, a part of it still is in the hands of the "Lolos," but it is now well settled in all the more fertile sections by the Chinese themselves. Yet it is much as if we were still ashamed to say we were Americans and proudly claimed to be natives of the various lands from which our forefathers came generations ago, for fear of being mistaken for Indians! This is a fine example of the conservatism and inadaptability of China as contrasted with its powers of assimilation. To-day there are estimated to be more than sixty-five million people in the west central province of China, more than in any other province, though not more to the square mile; and of these certainly not more than a third have anything but a hand-to-mouth existence, hunger overtaking them whenever they are three days out of a job; and certainly forty million cannot afford to go to school or spend their time and energies on anything but getting rice for their bellies. For the rich soil is already overworked, even if the other resources of the province are undeveloped.

Another thunder-storm and two hours of rain in the early afternoon, the only real daytime storm we had encountered since leaving Chaot'ung, made the roads worse on the ninety-*li* day out of Tzuchow after a later start than I would have preferred, so that though Yang and I reached Nan-ching-yi before dark, it was high time to turn in when the coolie with the bed and kitchen arrived. But the sick coolie dragged in long afterwards. Ever since the second day he had been hiring assistants along the way, at what seemed to be about ten "cash" a *li*, and strutting along behind them like an aristocrat. I know he paid a thousand "cash" for his longest hundred-*li* stage, which at a dollar a day left him more than 50 per cent profit, except that, of course, he had to get home again, possibly without a load. We slept that night in a church, and a more filthy lodging I have seldom had in China,



for whatever the itinerating missionary may teach his rural adherents, the cleaning of their buildings of filth, roosters, pigs, curs, and the rest is not included. I moved some wooden benches aside to put up my cot, and Yang put two more benches together to make himself a bed, for he was even better than the average Chinese at sleeping on anything, with anything or nothing wrapped about him. The next day was easier, cool and dull with sprinkles of rain, the stone road somewhat less broken, crossing a ferry in a very large town where a bridge had fallen down some years before. There were no real hills, though windings and undulations were constant. We finally put up in a brand-new family temple, which meant the best Chinese lodgings, at a cost of five cents to the caretaker; and he would give me all the gossip and legends of the vicinity. There was always a boy or some one else to go out and cut *chin-tsao* or *lü-tsao*, and within limits we could get anything we needed. Corn lay on the temple floor about the altar, so that we could buy all the horses could eat; Yang could always find some sort of table and at least a sawhorse chair. To be sure, more or less of a crowd gathered out of the ground even there, but they could be shooed out even if the caretaker did not stand on his dignity and that of the temple family and order out all but his personal friends and those with influence. Certainly such a temple is preferable to a dirty "church," and the dead are often pleasanter company than the living in China. It was the seventh day of the seventh moon, and curiously enough the seventh of our August, for that year August coincided with their seventh moon from the first to the twenty-ninth, after which they went over into their eighth moon. In some ways the lunar calendar is better than ours, and it is more accurate about the middle of winter and summer. New red paper had been pasted before all the temples and shrines, as the date was a kind of midyear New Year's, and people were burning wads of brown paper "cash" before the shrines of their ancestors, in order that they should have money to pay their semi-yearly bills, something the survivors on earth often lacked.

Two days out of Chengtu the first wheelbarrows I had seen in southwest China appeared at the large town of Chienchow, with two striking old pagodas, very different in appearance, on opposite sides of the river, which we crossed by ferry. The wheelbarrows were of the small one-passenger kind, and were used largely to wheel the lazy soldiers along the stony road, slippery with slimy mud. But the vehicles soon died out again and did not reappear until we reached the great plain of

Chengtu. In Chienchow every temple and other place of size was full of the ubiquitous armed and uniformed coolies, miscalled soldiers, who hung their washing across the main street. There were many *likin* stations in their charge, though they did not bother me; evidently the statement of my coolies that the stuff they carried belonged to a foreigner was enough. Between Chungking and Chengtu there were then thirty-nine tax stations, to say nothing of the acknowledged bandits; from Chungking to Mienchow in the north there were fifty-three such stations, besides other small tax offices on the way, each collecting from one to ten dollars. It was as if we stopped to pay transportation taxes twenty times between New York and Philadelphia.

Nearing Chengtu I met for the first time coolies with leather shoulder-pads, though I had often wondered why they did not thus save their shoulders from the saddle-sores caused by the pressure of the pole into the backs of their necks day after day. This form of saving one's skin seemed to be somewhat looked down upon, much as a tenderfoot is in our West, though of course the Chinese are not the teasing rowdies that Americans are. There was little or no *bay-ing* on this side of the Yang Tze; the road is too level. But incredible loads of brick tea are carried up into Tibet beyond Yachow. For nearly a whole day I passed a great mail-train of *t'iao-fu* looking worn out from a long trip, stretching endlessly along the narrow way, each with two huge sacks of what seemed to be parcel-post, the insured variety of which is much used in getting goods in and out of Szechuan—cruel loads even if the road had been perfect and the weather cool. I began to see necklaces or rosaries of pretty little white jasmine flowers against brown sunburned bodies naked to the waist. Later I found these were not for ornament but are used to improve the flavor of the "jasmine tea" that even the coolies drink in that region.

Ch'a-tien-tze, the name of which no doubt has something to do with tea, is approached by miles of steps eight to ten feet wide but not very high, cut in solid rock hillsides; the only real ones we had found to climb since leaving Yünnan, the footsteps of centuries had worn deep paths even in these. Here at only eighty *li* from the capital we found ourselves in the mountains again, but there were so many travelers now that only with luck did we get into the last possible inn just before sunset. I suspect that the proprietor or his agents took advantage of this, unless it was that my best servant was learning how to squeeze, for when I came to *swan-i-swan* or cast up accounts with Yang in the capital he alleged that we had paid nearly ten instead of merely five American

cents for my private room and the horse's lodging and food there. In any case I am sure they took no such advantage of the crowded condition of the town as do most American hotel clerks.

I was sitting down to another of Yang's several-course dinners and thinking all my troubles were over, except perhaps the danger of being robbed in the eighty *li* across the plain from the foot of these mountains, and that I had made this great overland trip between the two principal cities of western China without a mishap, when the inefficient but good-looking one of my coolie pair came slinking in to announce that the two boxes containing all my baggage of more than eating and sleeping importance were lost! It seemed from his excited chatter, after some conversation, that it might perhaps not be quite so bad as that, but it was not wholly comforting at any rate. After his usual custom during most of the journey, on which he alleged he was sick and perhaps was, the fellow had hired a man along the road to carry his load, and though he did not know him from Confucius, and had no other hold on him than the *esprit de corps* that exists between coolies, he had stayed behind to drink tea and rest up. Since then he had neither seen nor heard anything of the man or my boxes. I handed him the lantern and pushed him out into the night, with orders not to return without all the property for which he was responsible, and then turned in with none too rosy thoughts. But they were unnecessary, for in the morning there were the boxes and the coolie. His carrier had stopped somewhere along the road; and two men, partly uniformed and with guns, had come in with the pair during the night, and of course expected a tip for protecting the stuff from night thieves. They got a good breakfast each, but the coolie was the one man who worked for me in China who got no *ch'a-chien* or "tea-money," as missionary influence has emasculated the good old name "wine-money," at the end of his service.

I set off alone early next morning on a brilliant sunny day, first high up over a rocky hill with many more wide stone-cut steps, then down a long stone stairway to the great plain of Chengtu. Flat as a lake, except for a rare hillock in one or two places, a hundred and fifty miles by fifty or more, it is in some ways the greatest plain in China, 1700 feet high, though it did not seem so in August. Now it was one vast sea of ripening and waterless rice; there was no end to it as far as the eye could see, though hazy mountains could be glimpsed to the north before I reached the city. A mud and stone road unworthy the name—for nearing the capital it became worse instead of

better—took me slowly across it in sweltering heat. The two rows of stepping-stones, which long before I reached the city became one row, fell away on either side into paddy-fields. It seemed idiotic that they had not put the stones together, especially as they were building for hundreds of years; but of course the coolies could step from stone to stone, if my horse could not, and they were saving precious materials and much carrying from the quarries, of which there were none on the rich loam plain. I recalled the Chinese who said only the coolies cared what the roads were like. But the slipping and sliding made horseback travel much like riding an elephant or a camel, and the earth alongside was too much of a slough to be used. Though there was such a procession as America has never seen, and no order, no right or left, among the incessant rows of travelers, they rarely quarreled over the right of way. While a file of soldiers turned out on one side for a *t'iao-fu* and back again for me, so that their progress was snake-like, there was nothing remotely suggestive of resentment on their simple, surprised faces. It is no wonder that the people of this region say "*sen-k'ou*" (animal) instead of "*ma*" (horse); there are so few beasts of burden, except the human one, that they could hardly be expected to recognize one form of animal from another. One of the most amusing things in China is to ride a horse through one of the densely crowded market towns in these parts where horses, or indeed other four-footed draft-animals, are almost unknown. Like the characters in a movie or in a Shakspeare play suddenly catching sight of the devil, the dawdling villagers shriek as the horse's nose appears over a shoulder, one after another diving into the slowly moving throng as each catches a glimpse or a sound of the animal, or as some one sings out a startled "*Ma lai-la!*" The women rush out and snatch their dirty urchins, even their precious pigs, out from under the hoofs of the animal, who would not step on a postage-stamp. That cry of "*Ma lai-la!*" had sounded all the way across southwest China, but especially after we left Lao-wa-tan. It reminded me of the foreigner who, having made his first trip with a donkey-man and finding that the cry of "*Lü-tze lai-la!*" got people out of the way, used it when walking through crowds. He got action, but also hilarity, which he did not understand—until, unfortunately, some one informed him that his slogan meant, "Donkey coming"

There was the old familiar sight of men, and perhaps some women, though I am not sure of this in so bound-footed a land, on treadmills with parasols over them, pumping water into the rice-fields across the



My Chengtu host having lent me his chair of state, with the aristocratic up-curved poles to lift one above the common herd, I made a formal call upon the governor



The main gate of the old imperial city in Chengtu, from which the governing Manchus were driven by the revolution in 1911. Most of the old palaces now serve as schools



Under the ruthless orders for street-widening many a Chengtu shopkeeper had to cut away his whole shop in front of the dwelling occupying the back half of the building



Perhaps some such method was used for carrying great stones during the building of the pyramids as this means of getting mammoth granite slabs where they were needed in Chengtu under renovation

great level fertile plain. There were *t'iao-fu* without number, some carrying two children in their baskets—twins are at least one advantage in China—and as I neared the city wheelbarrows, seen only briefly in all west China, appeared again. Every hovel sold very broad-brimmed hats of the old American farmer style, made of rice-straw, the makers living and working in ordinary mud and thatched huts, and throwing the product out to dry in the sun as it was finished, so that there were half-acres of them. Many hut shops and restaurants and tea-houses as well as larger villages appeared, and finally the two or three smoking chimneys of Chengtu showed up against the dead flat, deep-green horizon, hazy even in the brilliant sunshine, so different from that of Lanchow, the other far western provincial capital, or even of Yünnanfu. I soon found myself involved in the great suburb before the East Gate, a huge noisy place filled with shade-grown men of the cities, their pale faces and bodies naked to the waist so different from the sunburned brown ones of the country, and who may really be called the yellow race. I made a turn to the left across an old covered bridge, another to the right, followed by a ride within sight of the great city walls which I had not even entered, and found myself at the American and British missionary university, with a vast campus and more and better buildings than the average American university. Most of the foreigners, especially of the male variety, were off in the hills for the summer, though Chengtu itself would not be a bad summer place out here on the campus. As Yang and my men did not get in until well after dark, I had tea and dinner in borrowed misfit clothing, for missionary hospitality has no limits, except the sharp line between vice and virtue.

## CHAPTER XXII

### CHENG TU AND BEYOND

**S**TRICTLY speaking, I spent only one night in Chengtu, though, with a short trip to the west thrown in, I put in more than half a month there. It was my good luck to become the guest on an equitable basis of a former American missionary, who had opened the station in Tibet and had long worked here, and who was spending this hot month out on the campus of the vacationing university, where there was tea and tennis every afternoon, and broad stretches of grass, in contrast to the Chinese city near-by, on which our horses luxuriated. Out on the porch of the missionary mansion where Yang Chi-ting slept the sleep of the just on the smooth bare floor-boards that were much better than the average bed he had known there was usually a cool breeze; but I, being "rich" and ostensibly a person of importance, had to spend my nights in a bed in a room under a roof, so that much of them was passed between dozing and being constantly tickled awake by the rivulets of perspiration that trickled down my body. It was not so much the heat as the humidity, perhaps; but if Chengtu is as high above sea-level as the geographers tell us, it does not seem so in August. Even a swim in one of the swift streams that were really irrigation-ditches among the velvety rice-fields that bordered on the great campus did not leave one cool after a formal dinner in white garments, even if we went so far, there being only Americans present, as to demand equality of sexes and take our coats off, like the cool, placid ladies. No wonder the men had to go to the hills!

In town things were still worse, partly because, though there was heat enough anyway, this was the season, from the twelfth to the fifteenth of the seventh moon, when wads of paper "cash" had to be burned to the dead before the houses and shops. Some shopkeepers advertised their filial piety by piling up veritable cords of it, and whole rows of women might be seen bowing their foreheads to the street before the burning "money" in front of their hovels. By day, especially toward sunset, some streets were filled with smoke, and the full



moon that always comes at this time of the Chinese month seemed to make the rows of fires all the brighter.

I went into the city almost every day, through the big suburb at one or the other of the four principal gates, unimposing themselves, but piercing one of the most imposing city walls in China, broad enough on top for the drying of grain, great splashes of red peppers, or for a score of other labors requiring wide open spaces. It was much grass-grown for all its cemented surface, the parapet torn here and there by the sporadic fighting of the last ten years. High as the average three-story house and broad as the Tartar Wall of Peking, it was one of the finest walks in China, on the whole clean, with many curves, though it eventually got back to where it started. Unfortunately, several barricades, often with brambles about and upon them, cut the stroller off, and in one place the walk was broken by the crucible-making section of the old Chengtu mint, producing Szechuan dollars and those coppers of immense size, 50, 100, and even 200 "cash" each, peculiar to that province. The view from the wall showed a city vast but nearly invisible, being flat as its plain round about and almost hidden in trees. Whistling pigeons circled in the air, and a whitish kind of squash hung down like Chinese lanterns in long rows on trellised vines in large gardens just inside the walls. The foreign hospitals, an American and a British church steeple or two, stood above the general dead level, not to mention the Catholic cathedral, where a dozen rivals in beard-growing may be found after mass on Sundays making merry with the few other French residents over more or less home-grown wine, and cigars specially made of uncured Szechuan tobacco, at one cent each, the price being their greatest virtue, though the traveler may be glad to get a box even of those. Until recently second stories were forbidden in Chengtu, as they interfered with the spirits of the air, but all that was now suddenly changed under a progressive young governor, and the Szechuan capital was making greater strides to throw off the old superstitions than most Chinese cities.

Perhaps we need a slight running start in recent politics before dealing with the governor individually. The year before there had been much fighting in Szechuan, which finally resulted in victory for those at least nominally with the North, and a young general named Yang Sen became ruler of the nominal capital of the province. He named himself *tuli* and was duly confirmed by Peking, which likes to pretend to have power and to keep rising young militarists in the far provinces attached to it, at least in theory. In spite of his exalted title,

Yang Sen had little real power in the province as a whole, holding only Chengtu and a few distant spots where he had men loyal to him. Ten miles out of the capital he had no more power than I, even the plain being under various local rulers. But whatever power over the whole province the *tuli* lacked he made up by his absolute rule over Chengtu, one of his first acts being to kick out the grafting provincial assembly.

Of course I had to call on the governor. My host having lent me his chair of state, with the up-curved poles raising the rider well above the common throng, and I having donned my most nearly spotless whites and summoned three carriers, the least with which a man can make an official call in Chengtu—to have gone on one of my horses would have been like wearing a golf-suit to a dress ball—I was rushed into the city. The chairmen of Chengtu are famous throughout China, and they make nearly five miles an hour when on official business and gaining personal face thereby, the odd man or men changing with the others every block or two without a break in speed or smoothness, nonchalantly knocking the common herd out of the way. The entrance to the governor's yamen, heavily guarded by the soldiers of Yang Sen, stretched back through doorway tunnel after tunnel sidewise through many a long building with courts between them, as is the custom in China, to the *tuli's* own quarters.

I trust I am not prejudiced in his favor because my host was a political adviser to Yang Sen, but the governor struck me as a fairly likely young man among the many who now hold big power in various parts of China. Born in a small town near Chungking, he was called a foreigner in Chengtu, so perhaps the people were not much surprised to find how over-friendly he was to Westerners and their ways. He seemed to like Caucasians as much as he was cordially hated by the people he ruled, and he took advice from foreigners more readily than from his own race. He looked like a very ordinary Chinese of the brighter class, and much younger than his thirty-eight years—this is the young man's day in China, and not a military ruler of importance in Szechuan was more than forty.

In Lüchow and the other towns he had commanded for a time on his way to this more important post, Yang Sen had been ruthless in carrying out his Western ideas of civic improvement, notably the widening of streets. I happened to reach Chengtu just as this reform burst out in full furor there. Things move fast sometimes in slow-moving China; an American city that had its improvements thrust

down its throat as rapidly as this would develop nervous prostration. Every day we went into the city a new street was sure to have fallen victim to forced widening; now it was the Great East Street, now the important artery from our South Gate across the city; before I left, fifteen of the most ancient and honorable streets of Chengtu were in the throes of being surgically treated for narrowness, without anesthetics. Yang Sen would send men through the streets to mark the new wall- and roof-lines, and immediately the chopping back of all houses and shops on both sides and the entire tearing down of some of them began. If the owner himself did not immediately get workmen at it, the governor did. This gave excellent opportunities to carpenters and masons, as every one needed them at once, though Yang Sen did not permit any such ruthlessness from them as our own politicians often have from our contractors and labor-unions. In China the property-line is in the middle of the street and, as in the case of the country roads, these have no real right of existence but are trespassers on private property. Moreover, the owner has to pay taxes to the middle of the street, and he naturally pushes his building as far out toward the center of it as possible. The Chinese custom is to have the shop in front and the residence at the back, often in the same single room, and all the stock, all the household goods and gods came to light under Yang Sen's ruthless method of reform, while the untouched dust of ages filled the streets in clouds, and one could hardly make one's way through them for the mud and débris, the hurrying workmen and their materials. Great North Street was a quarry of dirt-heaps, broken lumber, scattered granite slabs for the proposed curbs, and all the rubbish from the half-demolished houses. Old citizens suddenly coming upon the famous Great East Street would hardly have recognized it in its widened but still rubbish-covered condition. Looking down from any of the gates one beheld a chaos of things and a feverish activity suggestive of times of war. The owners were rushing to save what they could of walls, carved partitions, roof-tiles, so that it recalled the fire at the south gate in Yünnanfu. Many a Chengtu shopkeeper had to cut his whole shop away in front of his dwelling, and sometimes fully half of that also had to come down.

The governor did not stop at half-measures; he had the streets themselves, which the throwing out of all the rubbish of generations had elevated, cut down to the common level, and then he would pave them with flagstones so that rickshaws, virtually unknown in the western provinces of China, could circulate freely and easily—a promise

which the latest news from my host there says he actually accomplished. Along with the militant widening of the streets, he began the tearing down of the outer wall at a city gate, as the little openings are insufficient for the traffic that now pours through them. He was threatening even to bring automobiles to the province, and all that kept him from putting street-cars on the city wall was that no one in foreign lands would lend him the money—just why he never could understand. The governor was credited with saying that he would even have abolished one of the oldest customs of China by putting in a sewer system, were it not that in deadly level Chengtu the sewage would have nowhere to run. When some one asked Yang Sen why he did not go more slowly, he said that he had to hurry lest new fighting overturn his government before he had done any good for Chengtu. He was already assured of being remembered for centuries to come, even if he does not remain to carry out all the program he had laid down. Yang Sen has the misfortune to have rather a small protruding mouth, and the people were already calling him the Rat and saying that he would gnaw all the town away. But he showed no more outward sign of resentment at their dislike than the merchants and shopkeepers, sitting among the scanty remainders of their marts and homes, did of the dejection and anger underneath their placid pale-yellow faces, though every one knew they would “get” the reforming governor at the first opportunity.

The control of arsenals and mints is one of the chief advantages of being a military dictator in China, and next to the rich opium graft it is the chief cause of civil wars from Shanghai to the Tibetan border. My special entrée to Yang Sen perhaps made it unusually easy to visit the Chengtu arsenal, a ride of an hour or more out of town on my little stallion—the big gelding still showing weariness from our longer trip, and Yang scorning to jog on anything but his own feet for so short a distance. Now that nervy Dr. McGovern tells us that there is a good arsenal in Lhasa, perhaps I ought not to have been surprised to find this one modern industry so near the borders of Tibet, within sight of it on a clear day. Chengtu's arsenal was established by the Manchus twenty years ago, and is mainly equipped with German machines. They were producing a hundred rifles and 20,000 cartridges, and some bigger guns, a day. There was a time when rifles produced even at the Hankow arsenal had wooden bullets, and a real one could be safely fired only by a long string attached to the trigger. A foreigner once gave a soldier of his escort a dollar to fire his rifle from the

shoulder, and ten cents to pay for the cartridge (each of which must be returned or accounted for), and the recoil threw the doughty warrior into the stream on which they were traveling, and bent the barrel so badly that the foreigner could not see daylight through it. But that is not the kind of work Yang Sen was getting out of his arsenal under its young superintendent, whose activities were not interfered with by the political figurehead above him; he had spent six years in Germany and two in Sweden, as a student, a workman at Krupps, and toward the last as inspector for Yuan Shih-kai, and had worked in various Japanese arsenals. Under him the establishment was as businesslike, energetic, and apparently efficient as any factory in our own land, the long lines of belts, wheels, and machines a great contrast to the usual Chinese hand industries in family huts.

After I had lunched in German and mainly from tin cans with the superintendent in the immense empty yamen of which he occupied a small corner, having just been called back from exile under the Southerners, I went across the river to the powder factory. Somehow one does not feel so much surprise to find the Chinese making powder, perhaps because they are credited with inventing it, but even there the modern chemical apparatus and methods were astonishing. Operations were in the hands of an older man who had spent three years in Germany twenty years before and never been outside of Szechuan since, yet who still spoke the tongue of the republican Reich fairly fluently, though with a strong Chinese—that is, a too light-lipped—accent.

Yang Sen's reforms include the doing away with cues, still worn by not a few in the rural sections of western China, if only in order to have something convenient with which to tie on their hats in windy weather. The police at the Chengtu city gates were armed not only with rifles but with pairs of shears, with which they cut off the cues of those daring to enter the city with them, selling the hair for their own benefit. But they were hampered by the fact that wearers wishing to keep this slavish adornment can roll it up under their hats or in the male turbans rather widely in style out there, for the police lose face before a hilarious mob of by-standers if they look under a suspected head-gear and do not find a cue. Though Yang Sen was absolute ruler in the city itself, his soldiers had been known to rob within sight of the city wall. The Christian owner of a tea-shop in a town out on the plain reported to a missionary that in a year he had lost to looting soldiers sixty-nine stools, twenty-four tables, and other furnishings in proportion; many of the things were in the dirty barracks

close by, but the owner was unable to recover them. Yet when he first reached Chengtu, Yang Sen had many of his own soldiers beheaded for looting; in fact, "Off with his head!" seemed to be as natural to this quiet-looking young man as with the queen in Alice's Wonderland. Many robbers are beheaded in the China of to-day, and even the rulers admit that they are not always sure of identities, though they say, "We can't make a mistake nowadays, for every one steals." When there is no other means of retaining the loyalty, or at least the services, of their soldiers, even such well-intentioned rulers as Yang Sen have them "spanked." I saw two who had been spanked, one afternoon as I was leaving the Canadian mission hospital in the city. The punishment had been administered with strips of bamboo, the number of blows and especially the vigor with which they are laid on usually depending on what the victim can tip the executioner. This pair of rather simple country fellows—though their faces suggested that they could have been bullies too when the power was on their side—had wanted to go home, according to their story, and evidently they were allowed to do so, for in China enlistment is in theory usually voluntary and cancelable; but first they had been given as a bonus such a spanking that it would be weeks before they could walk there, or even go comfortably in a chair, if they could have afforded one. Their thighs from the waist to below the knees were like raw beef-steak, swollen to more than twice the natural size, the blood-red skin seeming ready to burst with the pressure from within. They had crawled here, and lay on mats in the street, begging the mission doctors to take them in; but the doctors, finding they had no money, took the attitude that the military people should attend to their own cases. I saw them there two days later, still lying on their dirty mats, curs now and then sneaking up to sniff at them. They would get well in time no doubt, unless filth complications set in. If their stories were true, it explains why so many Chinese coolies turned soldier hesitate to terminate their "voluntary" enlistment when weary of soldiering.

Chengtu is perhaps best known to the world at large for its silks. The season for feeding the worms was over, and even the time of unraveling the cocoons in hot water—with the pleasure of eating the worms inside, a favorite Chinese delicacy. All the family, from the smallest child that could walk to the doddering mother-in-law, helped in the work, and most of them had their hands and forearms more or less permanently dyed the color of the silk with which they happened to be working. The threads rather than the finished cloth is dyed, so that the silk-weaving streets are brilliant from end to end with vivid



The coolie tea-houses of Chengtu differ from those elsewhere in China in having comfortable bamboo arm-chairs for their comfort-deserving clients



During certain seasons much paper "money" is burned for the use of dead ancestors, and many of the Chengtu shopkeepers publicly prove their great filial piety by burning great heaps of it in the street before their shops



Silk is one of the chief industries of the Szechuan capital, and the work is virtually all done in family dwellings rather than in the Western type of factory, so that many streets are long lines of brilliant colors



The silk-looms are usually crowded into mud dens that serve also as sleeping and living place for the weavers, the noise of whose labors from dawn to dark is unmuffled by anything in the way of a front wall



blues, reds, golden yellows, on the skeining-racks and spinning-wheels. Two silk-looms are commonly crowded into one mud-den shop-dwelling, the noise of the weaving unmuffled, the domestic sights unclouded, by anything in the nature of a front wall. Contrary to the usual Chinese and general Oriental rule, some of these weavers work with their backs to the street, but most of them manage at least to get the loom in side-wise, so they can catch an oblique view of the passing throng and know when to stop, or even come out into the street, to gaze at a passing foreigner or a religious procession.

Some of the houses of the silk-workers are owned by a huge temple in a garden-park still fairly extensive, though various rulers have taken land away from it. It is an aristocratic place, reminding one somewhat of the monasteries in Andean cities, and the monks had a haughty air, as if they were not much worried by the reforms of Yang Sen. Their gilded bronze Buddha is twenty feet high and holds down the spring which, according to Chinese cosmography, irrigates the great plain of Chengtu. The Chinese term for ten thousand, *i wan*, is easily said, but perhaps it is not merely for that reason or a natural tendency to exaggeration that so many things are reputed to be of that number, from the *li* in length of the Great Wall of China to the artistic little Buddhas about the walls of this ancient monastery, which not every one even of the Chinese faithful is allowed to see. More amusing was a lithograph, in the place of honor before the fat Buddha of the chief sanctum, advertising a well-known baby's food and showing the Prince of Wales in Oriental robes kneeling among the varied Asiatic worshipers. The Catholics also own several streets of silk-workers' homes. In contrast to this great monastery was the dirty little temple famous for its "cures" before which the grateful put up ex-voto offerings, on trees and walls, in the form of red boards bearing white ideographs, an improvement at least on the wax parts of the body put up in similar circumstances by pious Latin-Americans.

In the heart of Chengtu there is a section which does not owe its modernity to Yang Sen, several blocks side by side between two main east and west streets, with cool arcades beneath pillars, and reed shades over the tops of the wide two-story streets. The name, for once in English, of the "Happy Heart Home Furniture Shop" suggested by its literal translation what many of the gay gilded upright shop-signs with artistic Chinese characters really look like to the Chinese. There is not a city or a town in China without its tea-house, but in Chengtu they seem to open wider and more openly on the streets, many with two sides on a corner, like our saloon of unregretted memory. More-

over, the Chengtu tea-house differs from those chief clearing-houses of news and gossip elsewhere in that their comfort-deserving clients, released from the penance of the road or at best of a sawhorse, here take their ease in the whole-bamboo arm-chairs peculiar to the Szechuan capital. These chaired tea-houses and deep-shaded rice-shops, with now and then a fat man in the naked-to-the-waist costume of summertime Chengtu resembling the statue of the Laughing Buddha at the entrance to many temples—though fat men are almost unknown in the country districts of China—somehow carried the mind back to Paris and its sidewalk cafés and restaurants.

In Manchu times Chengtu was an important viceregal and garrison city, and to this day the imperial-city wall still stands in one of the better and less crowded parts of the intramural expanse, a part in which one may still see many Manchus, the women recognizable at least by their natural feet, even if their larger and more stately forms and perhaps something of the old costume do not betray them. Some of them do not look poverty-stricken, but one can find them mingled with the Chinese women, whose little feet are thrust up behind them like the rampant tail of a dog, at the edge of a lotus-pond stream in this once entirely Manchu section of the town, kneeling and sousing their clothes in the water itself, or scrubbing them with a brush on a sawhorse bench, after the time-honored Chinese fashion. As most of the Manchus were mere soldiers and had grown too lazy to earn their own living generations before the débacle of 1911, their standard of living is much lowered; the old and the weak were in many cases reduced to begging, and the young and able-bodied could not always find work, or do what they found. Some were killed; many drowned themselves or died of undernourishment and exposure. Fearing that the Manchu people will be exterminated, the *tutung* of the various tribes recently prepared a table showing the number still living and their circumstances, which was to be submitted to the President of the putative Central Government, with an entreaty that they be paid their long overdue stipends, as promised in the act of abdication. When we were in Peking these stipends had not been paid in fifty months, and Manchus fill no small number of the hundreds of free coffins which the police of the capital are called upon to furnish each winter. But Chengtu is warmer and more easy-going.

One of the first acts of Yang Sen after his arrival in Chengtu was to clear the squatters out of what no visitor of a year before

would have suspected was once a great park in the heart of town, though in its center stood the famous "railroad monument" of Szechuan, all the province has, except six miles of rusted track and a dead locomotive at Chungking, to show for \$15,000,000 "Mex" collected, mainly by forced contributions from the merchants, to build a purely Chinese railway. Now even the cages of the animals had been cleaned up; the lotus-lake was open to pleasure navigation; a good commercial museum was functioning, and there were several tea-houses and places of entertainment, including an outdoor moving-picture house—of which most of the stock naturally did not belong to the governor's enemies. Not the least interesting of my experiences in Chengtu was a Saturday evening at the new open-air movies. I went with my host, and therefore with the governor and most of his family, for one of the duties of foreign advisers to a Chinese military potentate of the interior is to translate the titles of the execrable American films that sometimes get that far up country. While the wildest of our melodramas flashed its lurid prevarications in the faces of the incredulous, yet often overcredulous, Chinese throngs, the thought came to me that perhaps they were judging it by the incredible things which their *tuli* was even then accomplishing in the ancient city. Fortunately we were there, for if we had not been able to assure the governor that life in America is not always what a film no doubt forbidden even in its native land purported it to be, he might have been forced in self-defense to renounce his allegiance to foreigners and their ways.

It was the first time I had ever had the pleasure of going to the movies with a *tuli*, to say nothing of his wives. A splendid rule is in vogue in the Yang Sen household; whenever the family goes out to the movies or to any other evening entertainment, one of the wives, turn and turn about no doubt, stays home with the children too young to attend, though with most Chinese there is no fixed bedtime even for infants. Combination body-guards and servants, their very up-to-date pistols always in their hands, kept an eye on a throng that filled the park like an honest bushel-basket of corn, and at the same time brought the *tuli* and his wives, and us his guests, tea incessantly, and now and then peanuts and the squash-seeds that are so valuable in China that peddlers offer the squash itself for sale only after the seeds have been removed. The six or seven wives Yang Sen then had—one must be cautious in matters subject to sudden changes—ranged all the way from the time-marked first wife, chosen by his parents when he was a mere school-boy with no visible promise of greatness, down to the

prettiest and latest, whom he had raised from the position of slave-girl to that of favorite of the moment. All but one of them were studying English with an American missionary woman, who came every morning to the residential part of the yamen. They were joined in this intellectual activity by the oldest son, who appeared to be about eight, and who not only ordered the wives about but showed an even greater evidence of promise to fill father's shoes by quickly fortifying himself with one phrase, "I suppose so," for use on all class-room occasions, making this ability to answer in English any question an excuse for never learning anything else. Two of the wives, according to reputable authority, never spoke, except through a third, but the rest were reputed to live together like sisters in complete domestic felicity. Being just then the favorite, the ex-slave-girl was naturally disliked by the others, though they took care not to show this openly before the governor. The five or six off duty that evening not merely sat on the same bench with their husband, in itself a serious breach of old-time Chinese etiquette, but publicly showed signs almost of affection toward him. Nor is that all. Most of the wives of the man affectionately called "Rat Face" by his doting subjects—though never to his face, for that would be to lose more than face themselves—had natural feet, two or three of them rode bicycles, even if there was little place to ride, and—if the breath of those who know something about the position of wives in most of China is not already gone—at least two of them had bobbed hair! It seems the governor had advocated this for years, a part no doubt of his policy of shearing coolies at the city gates; but what that particular "reform" seemed to Chengtu is suggested by the fact that the ladies of its missionary community who had also shorn their tresses were no longer treated with the old-time respect even by their coolies. How completely modernized, foreignized, nay, even Americanized, was the youthful ruler of Szechuan's capital can be still better realized when I say that he not only sat on a common bench, like the multitude close about him, but, when the midsummer evening grew too uncomfortable, stripped off his uniform coat with all its decorations and sat through the performance, well into the hot night, in his sleeveless undershirt!

The city gates of Chengtu still closed at sunset, as from time immemorial, so that if we had not been guests of the governor, and carried with us special orders to his soldiers to open them, we should have had to spend the night in the city. When the foreigners in town invited to dinner those living out on the campus, sleeping accommoda-

tions had to be provided along with the coffee and ci—I mean, of course, candy. But no one knows where the flouting of evil spirits will end in the Chengtu of Yang Sen, and the latest report from my erstwhile host brings the astonishing news that the gates are now left open all night long.

There was no paving on the west side of the city, which made it better for the horses in good weather, and Yang and I, and the Canadian youth who remained with me through the trip up Omeishan, jogged the forty miles to Kwanhsien easily during the day. The great dead-level plain was one vast sheet of rice now, bright rice-green everywhere, mere sloughs—which was one reason the soldiers were not fighting then—though in another month it would be dry and bare. In the fall wheat and rape are planted, and in spring the entire plain is a sea of mustard-yellow rape, from which oil, of an agreeable smell, is extracted. Then all this is cut in May, the water turned in, the whole plain plowed almost in one day, the rice set out the next, so that the whole character of the plain changes completely almost overnight.

There are many wheelbarrows about Chengtu, especially on the dirt roads of the plain, others cutting deep grooves in the flagstones outside the walls. They are simple contrivances, even for Chinese wheelbarrows. I tried one once for a few yards, just to see how it felt, but it seemed to me that turn about is fair play at such a job as that of wheelbarrow-coolie, since the respective suffering of client and pusher is doubtful, and I insisted on giving the coolie a dose of his own rough medicine, to the hilarious amusement of all the Chinese by-standers. Though Yang Sen no longer allows these ancient and more or less honorable forms of transportation inside the walls of the capital, one can still get an excellent or at least a cheap ride, if endurance holds, outside the city. Passengers are carried, or whatever the proper verb is, in great numbers on wheelbarrows in the vicinity of Chengtu; the ladies particularly, poorly supplied with transportation systems of their own, even if they do not have a child or baggage to carry, find this form of conveyance as convenient, and by no means so expensive, as we do taxicabs, to judge by their satisfied facial expressions. Sometimes, even when the load does not seem particularly heavy, the barrow-men who flock outside the Chengtu gates, as rickshaw-men do in more up-to-date parts of China, use an assistant chauffeur in front. The trouble with the wheelbarrows of the Chengtu plain, as with the taxicabs of many American cities, is that you do not know who, or what, was the last

passenger. The day we set out from the capital, endless trains of wheelbarrows were hurrying, as much as such a conveyance operated by Chinese could be expected to hurry, squeakily toward the capital; not only is axle-grease expensive and better eaten than wasted on axles, but the squeak brings good luck and drives off evil spirits. Besides, it saves the expense and the exertion of blowing a horn. Two huge hogs were a common load, some with two men to pull them, though perhaps most of the men were toiling along alone, cheered on merely because misery likes much company. Upon inquiry, we found that a great epidemic, evidently hog-cholera, had broken out, and the animals were being hurried to market before they died entirely, and even after they had. As soon as a pig stopped eating, thus showing that he had the disease, he was hurried away, head and back legs hanging over the edges of the barrow, perhaps a bit of straw under him if the man in his hurry had been able to find any, looking blood-red, as if with anger or fear, under his black bristles, and seeming so disgusted with what life remained that he even left the squealing entirely to the vehicle under him. But it is the Chinese hog's own fault that he has to be transported in uncomfortable ways. In the several towns we passed, some of them dense with market day, our horses plowing through them like ships through a heavy sea, there were half a dozen wheelbarrow-ruts three inches deep in the center of the single flagstone-paved street, dropping at once into dirt roads again. The wheelbarrows stop abruptly on the plain side of Kwanhsien, where the mountains begin to roll upward into Tibet; and *bay-fu* pick up the loads there, whence brick tea, which sells at 200 "cash" a catty, is carried in 250-pound packages over the terrific mountains ahead, the men not infrequently dying on the way.

A great labyrinth of green mountains rise abruptly from the dead-flat plain, as if, once they had decided to climb, they could see no use in putting it off, though there is a faint rise all the way from Chengtu. With its mountains, plenty of trees, a striking old pagoda, its clear rushing waters, Kwanhsien, 2500 feet above the sea and with the great plain of Chengtu *à perte de vue*, its city wall climbing a great hill like a mountain goat, is one of the prettiest little places in China. Politically it is still well inside China; indeed, almost any map will show the province of Szechuan stretching hundreds of miles farther westward. But ethnologically Kwanhsien is on the boundary between China and Tibet. Not merely do the mighty mountains of that isolated land begin to pile up inside the very wall of Kwanhsien, but tribespeople of

mainly if not entirely Tibetan stock fill the hills and valleys beyond; and though there are Chinese in the larger towns, they are virtually considered, in fact consider themselves, aliens. There was once a project, not yet wholly dead, to create that portion of Szechuan Province west approximately of a line drawn north and south through Kwanhsien into a new province, under the name of Hsichuan (West Rivers), with Tatsienlu as the capital. It has long been that in fact; the general who commands there takes no orders from the ruler of Szechuan and Chengtu, and it is from that almost entirely Tibetan town, 8500 feet up among the mountains and just below the great snow-clad range which one can see now and then from Chengtu itself, that any influence China has been able to exert on her former colony of Tibet since it threw off all Chinese allegiance in 1912 emanates. The Chinese power has been lately weakening, however, at best showing a bit of strength among the border tribes, and at just about the time I visited Szechuan the Chinese soldiers had abandoned their Tibetan wives and left this false Chinese territory to govern itself.

Just beyond the west gate of Kwanhsien the wide and busy trail crosses what is perhaps the greatest bamboo suspension-bridge in China. The most primitive Chinese means of crossing rivers is a single rope of plaited bamboo, which the two hands are needed to span, and which one crosses by carrying a piece of rope and a bamboo or wooden cylinder in two halves, slightly larger than the rope and polished inside. The crosser trusses himself up, takes the cylinder in both hands, and whizzes across the river, or far enough to pull himself the rest of the way, sometimes even carrying a bamboo tube filled with water with which he wets the sliding rope ahead of his cylinder to reduce the friction. Weighty articles, even live stock, are sent across rivers in this manner. From this beginning the bridges of west China range all the way to elaborate and expensive bamboo structures. The one across the Min River at Kwanhsien, the real boundary between China and the tribespeople beyond, is about nine hundred feet long, twenty-five feet above the river at normal water, and about ten feet wide; it has seven spans, supported in the center and at both ends by solid stone masonry, and in the river-bed by piles driven deeply into the earth. Being purely native, in no way copied from the outside world, it is startling to find in how many details it resembles the Brooklyn Bridge. The twenty three-strand ropes of split bamboo used in the structure, ten on the bottom and five on either side, are more than six inches in diameter. The flooring-boards are laid crosswise and fastened down

by smaller bamboo ropes running the full length of each side of the bridge. The rope fastenings are of the primitive, entirely handwork kind, yet equal to our best mechanical devices. Twice each year some days are spent in repairing the bridge; new ropes are placed on the bottom, the bottom ropes transferred to the sides, and the former side ropes discarded, to become useful as excellent torches. Besides the half-yearly repairs, the ropes, which sag under the constant and often heavy traffic, are occasionally tightened by means of primitive pulleys, and the boards are also being continually stolen, or broken, when they fall into the river. It is sometimes so impossible to get a pony over the bridge that it has to be blindfolded, tied up, and carried bodily across, like a Chinese pig. For all its size, the motion of the bridge is considerable, and it is not uncommon for people to get seasick in crossing it. The expense of the upkeep is met by money drawn from public lands set aside for the purpose. The initial cost of an iron suspension-bridge is of course much heavier than that of its bamboo rival, but in the long run it is much cheaper, and no doubt the sad day will come when the romantic suspension-bridge between ethnographic China and Tibet will be replaced by an iron one, like that over the Yellow River far out in Lanchow, and the foreign traveler can cross it in complete comfort—and fancy himself in Pittsburg or Schenectady.

Kwanhsien is the head of the irrigation system that makes the great plain of Chengtu an endless garden. This seems to date from about 200 B. C., when Li Ping and his son Ehr Lang, rulers of the tribes then inhabiting the region, cut off a ridge of composite which the city wall now climbs and turned the Min River out of its natural course through a narrow gorge on the western edge of the plain. The Min, racing down cold and crystal-clear from the mountains of Tibet, is taken in charge near the suspension-bridge. A dam, made of huge cobbles held in place by long bamboo baskets, cuts off the natural channel and turns the water into the plain. The regulation of the water is managed by the gorge and overflow, so that in summer, when high waters prevail, the surplus water which cannot get through the gorge is thrown back upon the outer river, which thus acts as a safety-valve against flooding the city and the plain.

About the first of December, the summer rains having ceased, the annual cleaning and repairing operations are begun by cutting off the water-supply of the outer river, thus turning all the water into the inner one. When the outer river is completely dried, the bed is cleaned out for about half a mile and the banks built up again with new bamboo





One can ride for many miles, if endurance holds, outside the walls of Chengtu on a type of conveyance particularly favored by the ladies whose bound feet make them poor pedestrians



Personally I feel that turn about is fair play at such a job as that of the wheelbarrow coolie of China, since the suffering of client and pusher is about equal



The wheelbarrows of Chengtu plain have this in common with our taxicabs, that one never knows who was the last passenger. It might even have been one of the cholera-dead or dying hogs I met hurrying to market in hundreds



The great suspension-bridge of bamboo cables across the river at Kwanhsien is ethnologically the dividing-line between China and Tibet, though politically China stretches many miles farther westward

baskets freshly packed with cobbles, after which the waters of the river are allowed to return to their natural channel. Then the inner river is dried in a similar way. When the waters are let in for another year, large numbers of people gather on the bank for the ceremony, and much importance is laid upon the force of the waters which flow in during the first few hours, for this is taken as an indication of the water-supply for the year. Children build castles of cobblestones in the river-bed to be thrown down by the waters; young and old, male and female, throw stones at the water, because of the superstition that those who throw a stone at the river on the opening day will be free from disease for the year. As soon as the official in charge sees the barrier opened he gets into his chair and makes for Chengtu as fast as his men can carry him, as it is reckoned very unlucky for him should the waters reach the provincial capital before he does.

Seen from aloft, such as at the high point of its hill-climbing wall, Kwanhsien shows the river divided into many swift branches, flowing away like branching railroads out of a great city to feed all the plain. All along the banks are irrigating dams and weirs, leading the water off into smaller channels, thus transforming a formerly desolate region into a fruitful and well-watered garden. During April and May boat traffic is much obstructed by these dams and weirs put down by the farmers, but at such times the peasant is master of the river and no one dares meddle with his dams. If the water-supply should be poor in the spring and insufficient for the farmers, they band together and march to Kwanhsien with hoes over their shoulders and amid the clashing of gongs smash the inner doors of the water inspector's yamen and demand water for their fields. He of course complies with their orders at once; that is, he gives them whatever good words and promises he can muster under the circumstances, and goes with them forthwith to the Dragon's Nest at the gorge, where he burns incense and candles; he takes a pot of water from the pool home to his yamen, where it is kept in reverential custody till the dragon is good enough to give a rise of water, when the official takes the potful back and, repeating his former ceremony and giving thanks, returns the water to the dragon in the pool. In dry years the viceroy himself used to send a deputy to beseech rain, for if it is too long delayed even the authorities at Chengtu may find an angry host of rustics clamoring for water for their fields.

The Kwanhsien irrigation system is not only the most remarkable sign of the hand of man in western Szechuan but one of the greatest public works in China, much more beneficial to her people than some

others more widely known; moreover, it is one of the few that have been kept in fairly good repair. It is a great blessing to the Chengtu plain in two ways, for not only does it practically insure the country all about the capital against drouths and floods, but the waters of the different branches of this great artificial river system are the best and cheapest method of transport, and therefore a great commercial as well as agricultural blessing to the people. But almost as much has been spent on the superstitious as on the practical side of the irrigation system. Once, very long ago, a great flood broke through the bank on the south side of the gorge, damaging a large tract of land. On the bank as it was rebuilt a large stone water-buffalo, its maleness greatly emphasized by painting certain of its organs bright red, squats gazing with rather a sickly expression at the place the moon, supposed to be the cause of floods, sets; and close by there is also a high stone post, called the Turn Wave Pillar, on which some strange imaginary beast does likewise. The first of these creatures is called a rhinoceros, but evidently the artist had no other model than the humble field-buffalo. It is agreed that these two beings—plus good dikes—have kept away most floods.

Rafts of timber from the mountains come tearing down the river and go out across the plain to Chengtu and other towns. It is a very dangerous calling to be a raftsman on these swift rivers; I have seen few sights more thrilling than the two or three rafts that came down while I was in Kwanhsien. When a man is drowned the timber merchant pays his relatives nearly \$20 gold! After an accident the river is closed for three full days, the length of time it is considered unlucky to navigate it. The rafts that come to grief are almost without exception wrecked just under the edge of the Kwanhsien city wall where the ridge was cut off, on a detached piece of rock projecting into the racing stream, known as the Elephant's Trunk, for if the head of the raft gets too near this rock it is almost sure to go down in the whirlpool at the turn. This cause of all the damage to navigation could easily be blasted away, but some legend declares that without the Elephant's Trunk and the surmounting temple evil would befall the whole irrigation system. The swift river seems to be an incitement to suicide, women dressing themselves in their best clothes and shoes and jumping in, men in the height of passion terminating one of the endless oratorical quarrels and appeals to the gallery which take the place of a fight in China by seizing their adversaries and jumping in with them. Few ever get out even if they repent while still in the air.

A famous old temple in the hollow of the hills just outside Kwanhsien is sacred to the god or the patron saint, originally the living builder, with the assistance of his son, of the irrigation system on which the life of the big Chengtu plain depends. Elaborate bronze and pewter paraphernalia occupy the altar of this deity; but, after all, Chinese gods, whether deified great men or pure imagination, look and are staged very much alike. But many simple countrymen from the plain come to pay their respects and buy tissue-paper prayers from a cheerful temple priest, his fan stuck in the back of the neck when not in use. At the entrances, and here and there elsewhere, in six huge characters which even he who runs under a coolie's load might read if some one had taught him to, is the far-famed motto of the man who originated the irrigation system: "Dig channels deep, keep banks low." His injunction has always been obeyed here, but the opposite has been done with China's chief sorrow, the Yellow River, where instead of cleaning out the beds they have gone on raising the banks until the whole river is in many places high above the surrounding country, with the frequent disasters to be expected. Latest news from Szechuan tells of the complete destruction by fire, not only of the famous old temple but of the forest round about from which it might have been rebuilt.

Up on the hills a couple of hours behind Kwanhsien is one of the several comfortable summer resorts of the Chengtu foreign residents, almost exclusively missionaries. There they live in temples all summer, the city fathers of Kwanhsien getting a good rental from them as foreign summer homes, though the huge painted gods stare down upon the Christian services. The foreigners would like to buy land and put up their own houses, but that cannot be, say the wise men of Kwanhsien, for once they do that they will destroy the *feng-shui* of the place and ruin the irrigation system.

It rained while we were at the irrigation city, but fortunately not hard enough to slow down the speed of our horses back to Chengtu, though the coolie carrying our beds did not get there until the following noon. On the way we met two Turks walking westward—a short, stocky, bearded fellow in a kind of smock followed by a tall lanky one in a long gown. These men come down from Turkestan by way of Kansu and sometimes take mule caravans westward. The sight of them carried me back to the days of Marco Polo. Of course there are many Chinese Mohammedans in Szechuan, as in the great western provinces to the north and south of it, but it is not common to meet

the real kind. Dying and dead pigs from all over the plain were still being rushed to market on squealing wheelbarrows that sometimes got mired in the soft trail. Some were still plump and red with the sickness, others gray and saggy, having died on the journey. But the coolies wheeled them right on, though Yang Sen, having an un-Chinese way of looking at some things, had forbidden them entrance to the capital. This made them all the cheaper in the towns out on the plain, so that every one, down to the very beggar boys who were afraid to eat the chocolate I offered them, was feasting on pork, greenish and sickly-looking even after it had been cooked.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### TO THE SUMMIT OF SACRED OMEISHAN

ONE can take a boat under the walls of Chengtu, on the little semi-artificial river coming down from Kwanhsien, and by merely changing to larger craft from time to time can go all the way by water to America or Europe. In fact, I brought to our shores as a steamer-chair one of the bamboo-and-ratan chairs in which people of importance are carried about the Szechuan capital, though without the two long bamboo poles and the other equipment that make it a vehicle there, for I foresaw difficulties in getting coolies to carry me ashore in it on this side. Their labors for me over, I sold my horses, saddles and all, to Yang Sen and, thanks to the difference between Yünnan and Szechuan currency, without loss; then next morning bright and early, though already late in August, coolies trotted my belongings from the campus down to one of the crowded banks of the stream that hurries past the city walls. There Yang and I and the Canadian youth joined an English official of the salt gabelle on one of those crude overgrown rowboats of which many ply the little river, covered of course, and flying the Chinese post-office flag as a warning to bandits. Under the command of the salt man's English-speaking secretary his several servants and the ten boatmen did their duties without my interference, and except for a two-hour stroll next morning over a neck of land which the boat took four hours to round, I rarely left my arm-chair until, at four on the second afternoon, I walked away up the flagstone-paved main street of Kiating.

That compact old city of silk filatures and soda-ash factories, of which the chimneys give it almost a Western aspect, sits also on a sharp nose between two rivers, one rushing excitedly down from Tibet as if pursued by lama demons, the other more placid. Across the larger one sits a famous cliff-carved Buddha, many hundred years old, cut in the red sandstone so plentiful in this vicinity that the walls of Kiating and neighboring large towns are made of it and with time become beautifully weathered. He sits in the conventional attitude, his arms on his knees, his feet bathing in the Min. I have no head

for statistics and cannot give you the distance from his feet to his head, but suffice it that he is about the biggest statue I ever saw, larger, I think, than the Colossi at Thebes and certainly larger-looking than the Rameses on the upper Nile. Stairways in the hillside close beside him have fallen into disrepair, and into the swift river, so that one must go some distance around and come upon him from behind. On the way there are some "*man-tze* caves," whole houses dug in the soft red sandstone by some pre-Chinese tribe, with bas-reliefs of horses and chariots and other things worth studying carved on the damp walls, though whether these were graves or dwellings is still in vigorous dispute among the amateur archæologists doing mission work in the region.

We finally came out, dripping with the climb, at a tea-house on a level with the Buddha's head, and by a bit of scrambling one can get over a wall and into the jungle that covers his scalp. One of the many cobblestone-made and black-painted curls, serpents in the Buddhist mythology, which cover the head, is enough for one to stand on; and to get out near the brow and look down gives much the same feeling as standing on the coping at the top of a twenty-story building. To jump into his lap, if no farther, would be suicide and, to some pious Chinese, no doubt a sure way to heaven or its Buddhist-Chinese equivalent. Two or three times a century some pious Celestial gives or wills money enough to provide the great Buddha with a shave and a hair-cut, which is accomplished by coolies bearing implements with which to cut away the jungle that grows even on his face. The tonsorialists had come only a few years before, so that all he had now was a mustache and a bush of mole-hairs, also perhaps left on purpose, since Chinese men pride themselves on this disfigurement and will under no circumstances have it cut off, though it be only one hair two feet long, for that would bring bad luck.

In Kiating there were of course the usual flocks of armed young rowdies in uniform, a bit impudent to foreigners and rough with the Chinese who did not have influence, keeping us all awake by their small-hour bugling. The general and his colonel in command of the immediate territory were completely independent and well off, since they held the great salt-wells of Tzeliuching, two or three days' chair-ride to the east, and they were able to pay and dress their soldiers better than the average in China. Yang Sen with his more exalted title felt that the wells should be his, since he needed the money, and a clash or a parley over this point was imminent. In preparation for one of his best arguments the general had recently sent out a proclamation



for candidates to his officers' training-camp, and three hundred sons mainly of the middle class had responded.

The wife of the salt gabelle Englishman with whom I had come down from Chengtu had spent the summer in Tatsienlu, unofficial capital of the Tibetan department of China proper, which is becoming a favorite summer resort for those not easily intimidated; and her first greeting to him when they met in a mission compound was, "Well, I've been robbed." As this was about as close as I ever came to the robbery so common in China, I was greatly interested in details, which the good lady was in a condition to give. It seemed she had left Tatsienlu with the usual escort, in a chair for Yachow, where one gets a big raft built on which to come shooting down the river into Kiating in a single day; and one morning, two or three days out, while she was serenely riding along, alternately reading and admiring the landscape, a man in uniform carrying an army rifle stepped out, looked at her caravan, then turned and nodded, as much as to say, "It is all right." It was, but he was not one of her escort, as she thought, for they had disappeared and only turned up as chipper and boy-like as ever some miles beyond an hour or two afterward. A very businesslike band of what proved to be brigands marched out upon her and ordered her carriers to put down her chair and that of a servant, to which the chairmen very promptly complied. The bandits worked very quietly and with absolute discipline. The lady was invited to dismount, one man holding a rifle at her back and another a bayonet in her face, while a third went all over her person as if he knew the tendency of foreign ladies to wear jeweled garters and to hide valuables in secret places, though they offered her no other personal indignities even by word or look. They searched the lining of her chair; they took all her bedding except the folding cot, which they threw disdainfully into the trail; they took all her silk underwear except what she wore, and similar things for which they could hardly have much use, unless for cleaning their well-cleaned guns, for even if they had lady-loves back in camp they would scorn to wear such flimsy things. She lost her money, all her souvenirs of a summer of search in Tatsienlu, all her personal adornments of any value, but after the way of ladies she was jubilant because she saved her wedding-ring, by which many even modern and long-married women seem to set such store; her hands were so busy trying in vain to prevent undue exposure of her person that the bandits evidently did not notice it. They robbed her servant and her coolies, not only of the goods they were carrying for her,

but of their own little personal belongings, yet they did not bother the chairmen, who sat smoking and chatting while the robbery lasted, and then picked her up again and jogged on quite as if nothing had happened.

The British consul at Chengtu, who was traveling in the same caravan, had exercised his official prerogative by getting up so late that morning that he had hardly set out when word came to him of the robbery. Thus he escaped the indignity of being personally "frisked," though he lost most of the things his earlier-rising coolies were carrying, among them the results of a hard summer's work in souvenir-hunting, and found his official papers strewn for miles along the trail. But the man perhaps most to be pitied was not there at all, for he had turned over to the consul the hundreds of films he had spent the summer exposing in a region no photographer had ever before visited, and went home himself, entirely unmolested, by what is considered a much more dangerous route. There are no true prophecies in such matters, particularly in China, though it was well to be reminded now and then that my pleasures were not without their dangers; two missionaries who had been working for years among the people of western Szechuan had been murdered on the trail during a vacation jaunt only the summer before, no great distance from where I was traveling.

Yang and I were off across the big plain of Kiating toward the sacred mountain of Omeishan at dawn of a dull day that later turned bright and too warm. For once I rode a *hwa-gan*. I had been promising myself for weeks that I would not come home without being able to give a report from personal experience on this simplest of Chinese conveyances, but the disgust of having a coolie less sturdy and poorer fed than I, or even a pair or more of them, do my walking for me as long as my own legs retained their pristine condition had always proved an excuse to put it off until next time. But it was now or never, since this was to be my last trip in the part of China where the *hwa-gan* flourishes. The Canadian missionary whose more or less forced host I was for the night in Kiating had men down from the foot-hills about Omeishan, and I was carried by two of these mountain-country men, who now and then changed with two others carrying light loads of such of my baggage as I needed on this short side trip. *Hwa-gan* riding proved on the whole not uncomfortable, even though it may look so; the mountain-chair has more accommodations than the habitual



The making of *tsao-hai*, or rice-straw sandals, widely used in China, is a common if not from the Western point of view very remunerative occupation



This cheerful dwarf earns his rice in a crowded but ingenious land by passing the long stem of a lighted pipe from mouth to mouth among street groups of coolies



The climb to the sacred summit of Omcishan, 11,000 feet above sea-level, is so steep that those unable to walk up can only be carried in this fashion



Wax is produced in Szechuan by a tiny insect which deposits a white excretion on the branches of trees

rider by limousine or Pullman would think. One can read in it far better than in any express-train, for the Szechuan chair-coolies slide along the flagstone roads in their bare or straw-sandaled feet almost as if in a greased groove, and if one tires of sitting or reading or viewing the passing landscape one has only to lie down, hitching the feet over the poles, and sleep while the journey goes right on. The motion is better even for sleeping than on any train, since for one thing it is noiseless, and what matter if one does resemble a corpse during one's afternoon siesta? The open air is a great advantage, and there are others, even if neither barbers nor stenographers are available on the *hwa-gan* train and the speed attained rarely rivals that of our best cross-continental expresses.

But the *hwa-gan* is better in fair weather than in foul, as I discovered not far beyond the reddish sandstone-walled city of Omeih sien, the county-seat, so to speak, of the district in which sacred Mount Omei is situated, and where the mountains begin. For we had hardly passed the enormous bell, half outdoors, and some of the other monasterial sights on the trip to Omei, when a mighty wind-storm broke, followed by much rain; and just where the hard climbing began and a *hwa-gan* might have been of some use the feet of the men began to slip so much on the smooth flagstones, and they were so evidently near exhaustion even though they did not complain, and I was soon so soaked in spite of what was left of my waterproof outfit of horse-back days, that I preferred walking up the fifteen-*li* foot-hill to crawling along like a wet sack of flour between two men who might at any time have slipped on the stones and dropped me with force sufficient easily to burst a wet sack of flour open.

That storm is remembered as the chief one of the summer, perhaps of several summers, by the mainly British and American missionary families who make an Omeishan foot-hill their summer resort, and without the hot bath quickly prepared and the blanket which was needed up there in addition to my own bedding, even though the place was not high compared with the mighty peak that would no doubt tower above us when the weather cleared again, I might have caught my death of cold—or again, judging by many past performances, I might not have suffered any evil effects at all, just as Yang, whose bedding and extra clothing had inadvertently been left behind, might or might not have been made an invalid for life if the cook and other servants of my host had not furnished him dry clothes and a place over the fire, when at last he and the coolies, who had lived in the

vicinity all their lives, turned up long after dark from being badly lost.

The combination of delightful scenery, almost ditto weather, though at times too dull and cold, and pleasant foreigners with little to do but visit, made an always present temptation too great, and we spent the day loafing among the many comfortable bungalows scattered over several foot-hills at the base of the great mountain, of which the sheer precipice face rose from the jungled depths of the deep intervening valley to the Chin Din, the Golden Summit, toward which I planned to start striving on the morrow. Mighty as it towered above us, it was hard to believe that it was a day and a half of hard climbing away—a hundred and forty *li* up and a hundred down, according to the Chinese—and that there are few if any cases on record of any one having made in the longest single day all the ascent from where we stood. Nor should I forget the magnificent view of the plain below and eastward from the foot-hill, when the fogs and mists cleared away enough to see its huddled villages, its stretching rice-fields, and its meandering streams on which both villages and rice-fields depend for their existence.

Though it was the height of the rice-harvest and all Kiating Plain and its foot-hills resounded with the *thump! thump! thump!* of the beheading-boxes, and missionary families living far away could not always leave their summer home as soon as they wished, my host managed to get me and my youthful companion three mountain men, at 1300 “cash” a day while carrying and 500 while forced to rest. We were off late in the morning, first descending considerably by woody paths, then falling into an important trail, and all the rest of the day we were climbing steadily, with one or two swift descents to get a new start, often by stone stairways steeper and narrower than those in a Chinese house.

The ascent of sacred Omeishan, its summit 11,000 feet sheer above the almost sea-level plain of Kiating, is no mere pastime for any one. We climbed on and on, through a delightful silence, only a singing bird now and then, miles of steps without a human being. Everywhere were densely wooded mountains except where sheer gray rock cliffs gave no foothold; for long distances there was no sign of man except the trail, then in places a glimpse through an opening of little steep patches cleared and hoed for potatoes. Now and again we came upon great rambling monasteries built almost entirely of unpainted wood, with roofs of bark or of reeds, sometimes thickly covered with jungle, or with iron tiles some two feet long and nearly half as wide, often

with lead sheets, from a mine four days to the west. These appeared every hour or two in the lower reaches even of this side road, generally perched on precarious peaks or edges, and not very full of the same lazy, dirty priests in padded gray gowns who overrun most of the holy places of China.

Black night and some rain had fallen almost before we reached the bottom of the mighty gorge between the monastery where the coolies would have stayed and the one I had set as the first day's goal; it was pitch-dark on a precipice trail between dense woods by the time we had laboriously thighed ourselves to the farther one, to find it tight shut and silent as the grave. A deal of pounding brought a man's head to an upper window in a structure that looked in the dim light like a medieval castle or fortress of robber barons, and about all but one edge of which the world fell sheerly away to unguessable depths, from where vast mists were now rising, congealing us to the bones even in the little time we rested from our exertions before being promptly admitted, on the assurance of my companion that we were foreigners.

That young man, who had lived in Szechuan all but the first few years of his life, had done what it is a pity more foreign residents in China do not do,—accepted the Chinese of all classes as virtually his equals, despite the squint of their eyes and the more yellowish tinge of their complexions. From boyhood he had tramped their roads barefoot or in *tsao-hai*; he had plowed thigh-deep behind water-buffaloes, had cut and threshed rice by beating the heads off bundles of it into a wooden box, had rowed with the coolie galley-slaves of the rivers, tracked with them along the shores, poled, pushed waist-deep in the streams when they went aground, had even tried running a wheelbarrow, carrying a shoulder-pole, and *bay-ing* on the back; he had drunk tea in their tea-houses, eaten huge bowls of rice in the street restaurants, tried all their native delicacies; in short, he had done everything that a real American boy who might manage to escape the caste consciousness in which his kind do their best to mold him would do, yet so seldom does, if he were turned loose in China without the preconceived notions of the haughty Western world. No doubt he had run some risks to his health, though there were no signs of it, and undoubtedly he had already consumed the peck of dirt which we are popularly supposed to consume during a lifetime; he had given his fond mama many a scare and would have given her far more, and even some to his tougher father, if they had known just how far

his thirst for innocent knowledge and experience had carried him, but *en cambio* he knew at sixteen more real facts about the Chinese than do all but the cream of the thousands of business men of Shanghai, who had spent an average of twice sixteen years in the Orient, and he could chatter the Szechuan *hua* with all its idioms and inflections and fine points until every one from the coolie and peasant of mountain recesses to the cultivated head monks of great temples sat up and took notice when he opened his mouth.

Four rather ragged and certainly not daily bathed priests, two of them boys and the oldest a man who had lived there for forty years, warmed up under the boyish enthusiasm and excellent Szechuan dialect of my foreign companion, and we had a confab with the old man on religious and other matters as deeply as his mind could go, while the boys got ready a kind of large cell. I recommend that old castle-fortress-like monastery, with its ancient, mysterious, labyrinthine interior, its very wide stairway like a ramp from a portcullis, to the attention of the writers of mystery novels, thrillers for boys, or melodramas of the screen, who have run out of locales. But we slept well, without an adventure, thanks partly to the very thick walls and the extra blankets we had brought along, for the air was so cold than one did not want an ear outside them. The youth and I were off again the moment one of Yang's good American breakfasts was over, leaving him to pack up and follow. The way now lay up an almost unbroken succession of steep stone steps through pine forests and flowery, berry-growing undergrowth that looked and smelled like Canada, though my China-grown Canadian companion hardly remembered that. The stone steps were endless, inexorable; the person who cannot push his own thighs up Omeishan has only one way of getting up,—by being *bay-ed*, carried on the back of a stout coolie in one of the frameworks in which they carry such incredible loads of rock-salt and the like. For not even mountain chairmen can carry a man or woman up that 11,000-foot stairway, with its endless stone steps that seem never to offer to cease, higher than Quito, higher than all but one of the capitals of Andean South America, up and ever laboriously upward.

Now and then we passed through a great stone arch; often we were sheerly on the brink of bottomless precipices that were no place for those inclined to be dizzy-headed. Yet there were some Chinese women, their little bound-feet shoes wrapped with corn-husks, among the long lines of mainly blue-clad pilgrims with the usual knapsacks and sacred characters on them that stretched to the sky above and the earth below



whenever we could get a clear view of the perpendicular woodsy trail and ridges. Everywhere the words, "*Oh-mi-t'a-fo! Oh-mi-t'a-fo!*" sounded, corresponding in general motif if not in exact text to the "*Om mani padme hum!*" of the pious, prayer-wheel-holding Tibetans not far to the westward. In fact the monks in their gray, cotton-wadded, kimono-like gowns and the priests at the many monasteries used the expression "*Oh-mi-t'a-fo!*" where other Chinese would have made use of the more ordinary form of "thank you," as for instance for a copper from a foreigner, though the constant contributions of the pilgrims they seemed to take as a right that called for no verbal acknowledgment. The monasteries and temples were now numerous, a huge rambling establishment every few *li*, and as the native pilgrims had to burn joss and drop at least a few "cash" before every altar and every god of importance, which the wily monks had seen to it were without end, during their roaming through every labyrinthine cluster of buildings on the whole climb, they could not at all keep up with us, interested only in any unusual features of the ever-recurring religious edifices. These were almost all on precarious sites, ever more numerous as we climbed higher, with the same silly rubbish covered with dust as elsewhere, emphasizing the uninventiveness of the Chinese, their conservatism and gift for copying, even more than their superstitions. Before most of the miserable mud gods there stood the long-familiar joint of bamboo containing divining-sticks of the same material, with a character or two on each, to be used in consulting the oracle, the same as are used by gamblers at fairs, pious priest and gambler alike shaking the thing, or having the client shake it, until one stick comes out or rises distinctly above the rest, the priest thereby telling the inquirer his fortune, or prescribing medicine according to the character on it. To take advantage of this right on the spot, there were "medicine" shops or open-air stalls along the way selling all kinds of prescribed rubbish, cinnamon bark, dried snakes, and the like. The Chinese seem to like gambling so well that they will gamble away even their health; or it may be that these bamboo dice-boxes made as good a guess as the average of our physicians. Besides, a man ill in a land without doctors for the masses would naturally grow desperate and try anything, once at least, like the invalids being *bay*-ed aloft in the probably vain hope that the gods would take pity on them.

Near the top there was much cutting of lumber with the cross-cut buck-saw common to China, sometimes three pairs of workers on a single log, and of great pillars, all for the building of more large

rambling wooden monasteries, as if there were not easily enough already to fleece all the poor pilgrims in West China. Some had been rebuilt—quickly devouring fires being not uncommon—or recently repaired, and were gleamingly new in their total innocence of paint or any equivalent; some were so old and weather-worn and overgrown with vegetation and falling to pieces that one had to look sharply to distinguish them from the surrounding uninhabited landscape.

The last hours were marked by the surmounting of one platform or terrace after another, with the unfailing religious establishment every time we had to stop for breath, with even mightier precipices and glimpses of parts of the great plain far below. The woods had turned frankly Canadian before we reached the top, with edelweiss, the orange-colored raspberry, little white strawberries, smartweed, thistles, bushes heavy with red hawthorn berries, flowers of many colors in profusion; and at noon we turned up at that one of the three great monasteries on as many peaks of the Golden Summit which more or less welcomes foreigners. There has been a dispute for centuries as to which of two of these, each on a knoll bulging above the summit, with a valley between, and looking sheer down the precipice face of the sacred mountain, is the higher and thereby entitled to the glory of being the highest holy place in China. To the naked eye of the impartial wanderer there did not seem to be an inch of difference, and there was plenty of glory to be shared among all three, even if one merely considered the view from the front platforms which they had all built out over the mighty abyss.

Omeishan is of course under vegetarian régime, and little besides rice and a few vegetables, including potatoes, which grow splendidly there, is available at the summit, and even these the hungry monks do not sell very willingly. So we were glad to be in time to contribute various canned viands and one of the two live chickens that had made the ascent on top of our coolies' packs to the rather slim midday meal which the salt man's cook was in the act of preparing, and to combine our resources as long as they remained. We could use meat if we wished to take the risk of future damnation, but there were a few rules for those who lodged in the temples, such as not being allowed to stay unless we promised not to use paper with characters on it for indecent purposes. Priests win merit by gathering and protecting the sacred printed or written words, though those in foreign script did not seem to matter. Certainly in that sense literature is not sacred to us.

Long rambling building after building piled up the back slope of the summit, the same old wooden temples, full of dusty junk and all sorts of idols made of mud and straw, more or less recently gaily painted. Some of the paraphernalia was of silver instead of pewter, and some was at least gilded with real gold, for these establishments on the Golden Summit are wealthy with the gifts of the pious. Nowhere have I seen a finer view, a place more like the top of the world, and I have climbed many mountains, with the world as far as the eye could see in any direction obstructed only by broken billows of clouds in fantastic formation, now showing through great gaps the world unfathomable depths below, now totally cutting us off from the earth by covering everything except the little island in space on which we stood. At times the clouds piled up the gaps of the mountain like smoke from some great conflagration; at others the trails and streams of the plain below looked like hairs writhing across it, rivers of many twists joining bigger ones that were somewhat less contorted in their courses.

The sheer, seemingly endless, incredible drop directly below our feet on the brink of the precipice before the monastery-temple, or on the wooden platform with fairly stout railing built over it by the monks—the big iron chains of other years having broken and fallen into disrepair—made a fine place to loaf in the sun and wait for the possible appearance of Buddha's Glory. It was so cold even when clouds did not rise high enough to come between us and the sun that all my clothing, that would have been suffocating below, seemed thin as tissue-paper here. It was hard to realize that right down due beneath us peasants from the tiny clusters of farm huts, which we could just make out as one does insects under a microscope, were no doubt out in the fields sweating copiously under the late August sun.

I have never had the misfortune to do any arctic exploring, but any man of dissimilar tastes who ever woke up in the middle of his long night up there and found the air any more penetratingly cold than it was in that wooden rest-house in the monastery on the brink of the mighty precipice of Omeishan and lived to tell the tale should be rewarded for his endurance with a brass medal. Nor did we have the deep unbroken stillness for which I had hoped, for every now and then, though not during the sleepest parts of the nights, since the monks themselves do not wish to overdo the piety, there came such a banging and thumping of a mighty bell in an adjoining temple room and a whooping and shrieking and general caterwauling as should have banished the most belligerent horde of devils as effectually as it

did the sound sleep from which it frequently tore me. There was no charge for this entertainment, fortunately, the monks depending for their income from foreign visitors on the not immoderate charges of rental for the room, considering its position, the scarcity of clients, the lack of competition, and similar factors, on goodly prices for rice or any other of the few food supplies available, and last but not least on the charcoal without which the visitor from the world below cannot live, for not only must his food be cooked but his room heated by it. There being unlimited forests at the summit, charcoal should be cheaper than in the dewooded world below, but instead it is so much higher in price that one would probably save considerably by making it part of the indispensable baggage he brings with him from the foot of the mountain. For it is not mainly the price of charcoal, but the weight, or lack thereof, which makes the foreigner really pay for his accommodation. I have no great objection to being now and then mulcted in a good cause, but when I am asked to believe that the basket of charcoal which I can easily lift with one hand weighs 100 *chin*, or 133 pounds, I may be flattered as to the opinion of my strength but not otherwise edified. However, there is no help for it, unless you bring your own scales to refute the palpably doctored wooden Chinese steel-yard, for of course one could not simply refuse to pay and leave bad repute for all the Caucasian race to trouble future visitors. So when I had made the scholarly old dignitary who headed the establishment lose face by coming himself late in the evening and pretending to verify the weighing, the protested bill was paid as presented.

Daily at about two in the afternoon, when the sun and the mists are just right, there appears on the mass of clouds far below the summit of Chin Din, down the sheer rock face of the platformed precipice, a kind of circle or nimbus which the pious Chinese refer to as Buddha's Glory, to see which is the chief motive of many who climb the mountain. Never a season and hardly a week passes that some pilgrim, disillusioned perhaps to find the same grasping bitter world up here and no help for his troubles after so hard and costly a climb to this far-famed abode of the gods, or simply losing his head at the terrific height, jumps off into the arms of Buddha's Glory and is seen or heard no more. For the Chin Din is many times higher than the dizzy throwing-off place at the front of the citadel of the negro tyrant Christophe in Haiti. A stone tossed a little way out to clear the edge of the cliff under the platform was never heard again; it just disap-



The *hwa-gan*, or mountain-chair, which I tried one day for experience' sake, is less uncomfortable than it looks, for if one tires of sitting and reading or viewing the passing landscape one has only to lie down and sleep



We lunch from our knapsacks in a temple on the climb to Omeishan. Great wooden fish with a loose ball in the open mouth are a common decoration of Chinese Buddhist monasteries



Though the monks on Omeishan like to impress pious pilgrims of their own race with the sacredness of their temple paraphernalia, they are ready to bring the pewter and silver, occasionally gold covered, symbolical things out for a foreigner with a camera



The pilgrims who climb in endless files to the summit of sacred Omeishan pause to burn incense and to kneel a moment before each of the many gods or groups thereof in every one of the many temples and monasteries along the precipitous way

peared in space. If anything is ever done about the bodies of these pious suicides it must be by the vultures or eagles, or perhaps the four-footed wild beasts said to abound in the perpendicular forests below. With the platform sometimes crowded with superstitious pilgrims gazing so intently for the miraculous halo that they might easily dream themselves into imagining they see it, there is always a possibility that some one will throw himself over the stout new wooden railing. But nothing happened during our stay, for there were not many pilgrims, and the plump-faced young priests and monks who made up most of the group that watched with us over the railing, when we were not left entirely to ourselves to lie in the sun and listen to the absolute stillness as if we had been transported to some other planet where we were the only life except the vegetation, were cynical-looking young loafers who would no more have thought of throwing themselves off, if indeed they really believed even in Buddha, than they would of missing a meal.

We got into long conversations, carried on mainly on our side by my young companion, with the often saucy and sometimes surly monks inhabiting the summit. They told us that a man had thrown himself into the arms of Buddha hardly a week before, as had several others that season, until the magistrate of Omeih sien many miles away but directly below us had threatened to punish the priests, the holy mountain being within his political bailiwick, if they allowed any more to do so. But what business was it of theirs if pilgrims wished to take things too seriously, and how could they stop it anyway? Did the magistrate expect one of them to eat his meals on the platform, some one to miss his siesta just to try to prevent this sort of thing all along the several *li* of cliff?

One or two of the higher priests we found of better grade, men of literary attainments and some apparently of real character. There are said to be among the monks on Omeishan many ex-officials who have lost their standing, some of whom become abbots and the like of the monasteries. But here within sight at times of Tibet, where the priesthood reigns supreme, one could not but reflect on how little prestige have the priests of China. Almost all those with whom we spoke thought I must have acquired much merit by having visited the most holy places and climbed nearly all the sacred mountains in China—and they were sure that I would therefore become a big government official when I returned home!

On the whole we had very good luck on the Golden Summit, for

though there were many patches and sometimes whole fields of white clouds, there was also sunshine every little while, so that even on the first day we saw the mighty cliffs below in their entirety and the vast plain of Kiating surrounded by great ranges by the score so far below this level that it was like looking down from an airplane on those over which the Great Wall clammers for ten thousand *li*. True, we did not see Buddha's Glory that Sunday afternoon, though we waited on the platform until long after the hour at which it appears, but we did get a moderately good half of it, rather briefly, next afternoon, and once on each of the days we spent at the summit we had a more than 50 per cent good view to the west of the great snow-clad range of eastern Tibet, one of which is thought by some to be higher than Everest. Along with the rest of the scene, that far western horizon rewarded the trip to the top with the most magnificent views I have ever beheld in much rambling to and fro on our humble footstool.

But except for that half-glimpse of Buddha's Glory in the afternoon, the second day we spent on the summit was on the whole stupid, for it was cold, and the view we got at dawn, after which we might have departed, did not change or improve greatly during the day. We strolled over through the pine-trees and the Canadian jungle, picking white strawberries and orange raspberries, flowers of all colors, to the other two summit monasteries, with a half-hostile attitude toward foreigners, unless it was mere indifference to the common Chinese civilities in the lazy fat monks. The roof of the foursquare temple about a court on the lower level of the middle summit was so completely overgrown with grass and the various jungle bushes of this altitude that one could hardly have told it from the surrounding peacefulness. Little kiosks or platforms or final bits of ground before each of the monasteries were fine places to lie and bask in the sun somewhat out of reach of the cold wind, and watch the play of the masses and battalions and individual white clouds swirl and form and divide as in the primeval chaos which unpius persons allege to have been the possible formation of the earth and to have taken more than the working days of a week without overtime.



## CHAPTER XXIV

### MUSINGS FROM A HOLY MOUNTAIN-TOP

**N**OT merely great places of pilgrimage but every Chinese city of importance maintains what foreigners call a "temple of hell." In several compartments on either side of the courtyard through which worshipers make their way to the gaudy gods beyond are scores of demons, protected by wooden slats from any possible retaliation by the living, demonstrating all the terrible forms of punishment awaiting those who do not behave themselves on earth—or who do not pay the priests to save them from such fates. All the niceties of modern surgery, without its anesthetics, are there,—sinning souls being sawed in two, disemboweled, sliced, boiled in oil, deprived of their attributes of sex, subjected to every conceivable indignity and torture, by cheerful-faced little devils made, as are the victims and the implements of infliction, of sticks, straw, and mud, outrageously painted. Perhaps our Western phraseology does not fit them, for they have neither tails nor cloven hoofs, and the judge-in-chief who presides over them is a most beneficent-looking being resembling the scholars and emperors whom the Chinese have deified, who looks benignly down upon the souls kowtowing in vain before him without a suggestion either of glee or pity, rather with the expression of the old-fashioned father who used to say to sons of my day, "This hurts me much more than it does you, but I have to do it for your own good."

These scenes depicted in full gory detail in the hellish part of many a Chinese temple show a somewhat limited imagination, at least in the artists' execution; but there are so many features strikingly like Dante's version of what awaits us beyond the grave that one cannot but wonder whether they were not brought to China by the Nestorians; or did the early Christians get them from the Chinese, long reputed experts in thinking up and carrying out ingenious forms of punishment? Possibly it was Marco Polo who brought the Catholic conception of hell, for these Chinese places of torture are really a kind of purgatory. Almost no one, if I have the Celestial notion clearly, goes directly to heaven, which seems to be one of sensual pleasures, much like that

pictured by Mohammed, but to hell first, as a kind of clearing-house, and only those who have been supernaturally good will be passed on at once to whatever the Chinese consider perfect bliss. According to a native pastor who once served me as cicerone, those who steal cloth from coffins or furnish medicine for abortions suffer the worst tortures; by Chinese standards the throwing away of a girl is apparently all right, but abortion is a horrible crime because it might destroy a boy. Those who make medicine out of dead men's bones are boiled also, but only in water, which is popularly supposed to be less unpleasant than being boiled in oil. The trouble with all such hellish matters is that no one on earth really knows what is the worst form of punishment, for, like our lynched negroes, those who have been through any of the more serious ordeals can never be given another in order to compare and report.

The whole amusing business of trying to make people behave on earth by promising rewards or threatening punishments in an after-world is contrary to the teachings of Confucius, who specifically rejected the doctrine. But only the upper crust of Chinese society even pretend to put their faith in Confucius, and in the popular mind all matters of religious import are badly mixed up. According to the true Buddhist, good deeds on earth help the soul to be reborn on a higher plane and finally to attain Nirvana or Nothingness. But this is too ideal a religion for the common people, who think of an individual soul, remembering the past, as do probably most Christians; hence the appeal of a heaven of sensual pleasures. The popular Chinese spirit-world is a replica of the "Middle Country"—as I suppose Chung Kuo, the Chinese name for China, should be translated, now that she pretends to be a republic. This subterrestrial China has the same officials, the same customs, even the same marriages, as in this world. There, just as here below, are wars and rumors of wars, insurrections, banditry, kidnapping and holding for ransom, no doubt concessions and extra-territoriality. There are gods or spirits for everything,—birth, death, fire, water, wind, health, wealth, literary success, military prowess, all the diseases; you can bribe the gods and demons of the Chinese after-world just as you can rulers and judges on earth, the devil himself probably taking the largest squeeze. There are hotels there—with plank beds, I suppose—and all the other misfortunes of earthly existence. With their purgatory idea, their bribing of the gods, their gaudy representations of them, the elaborate services in their honor, with the incense of joss-sticks so like that of the censer, it is not surprising that

many Chinese become Catholics; indeed, it is a wonder any of them can be dragged into the colorless, austere Protestant fold.

It is commonly said that every Chinese has three religions,—Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism. In reality he would have none if he practised only those, for they are philosophies, doctrines, or magical practices, not religions. The Chinese themselves sometimes speak of their four religions, and the fourth, which is devil-worship, is the most powerful of them all. The true religion of the Chinese is infinitely more ancient than all three; it goes back to the dawn of civilizations; Confucianism, which at times seems to confound itself with this, is only the layman's prolongation of it. That religion is, briefly, the cult of the dead. Upon it has been superimposed, without by any means blotting it out, the later doctrines or religions, some of them from foreign sources, and as in the case of human immigrants or conquerors they have been absorbed and Chinafied.

In a sense the Chinese are not a religious people, for all their religions; nor are they by nature exclusive in such matters, and in consequence they are prone to let a man follow any doctrine he chooses. There are hundreds of miles of populous Chinese territory with scarcely a priest of any cult; and compared with their neighbors, the Mongols, the Tibetans, even the Japanese, the Chinese are comparatively free from the bias of religion. They did not even take the alleged sacredness of their emperor very seriously, possibly because of that sense of humor, that tendency to take nothing, not even themselves, with solemnity, which is perhaps their chief difference from the Japanese. With all their religions, too, indifference to the moral demands of any real religion is manifest; often the most ardent religious devotees are the most immoral men in their districts. There is really no reason to show surprise at this; neither is Christianity as it is applied, for example, in South America, a question of morals; religion and morality the world over and from the earliest recorded time have lived far more in separation, if not complete divorce, than as occupants of the same bed and board. There are millions professing the Christian religion to-day who see no connection whatever between their religious beliefs and practices and their personal behavior; in fact there are probably strains of this separation running beneath every church steeple in our own model land to-day.

While there is plenty of superstition, there is no visible indecency in Chinese temples—in marked contrast to Mongolian and Tibetan conditions, where the lamas dote on statuettes in obscene postures and on

gigantic statues of gods and goddesses treading souls underfoot in the ecstasy of their sensual pleasures, while swarms of the faithful, including children of all ages, come to worship them, particularly to pray for offspring. On the other hand, the Chinese has no reverence, as we understand the word, for his religious edifices and paraphernalia, so that there is none of that atmosphere of sanctity which even the stray visitor finds in church, synagogue, or mosque. Surely the priests of China have overlooked the value of psychological effect. The same man who bows down abjectly before a gaudy mud god, bribing it with a handful of "cash" or a stick of incense, sees nothing wrong in throwing his coat into the god's lap or tossing his hat upon the august head, if it happens to be convenient to do so. One may sleep as safely among the demons of hell in a Chinese temple as in the far more infernal inns; the foreigner who climbs across the knees of the gods in an effort to photograph them will not meet in one case out of a hundred with anything worse than good-natured grins from worshipers, caretakers, or priests. It is due as much to this non-reverence as to the broad-mindedness of their rivals that Christian missionaries not only can rent Buddhist temples for their summers but can carry on their services in them—though they do not of course return the compliment. This temperamental awelessness rather than intentional rudeness is the reason that mission congregations in China are disorderly beyond Western conception.

Even those who insist that Christianity is the only true religion often come to admit, once they have been seriously exposed to other philosophies of life, that there are good points in the religions of China. Primitive and wasteful superstitions flourish in connection with them, but these are not lacking in the most Christian lands. Have we not practices and beliefs very similar to the Chinese custom of using a ring of a dead mother's hair to protect her son? Is there after all anything particularly irreligious about an old woman burning a stick of incense before the altar, or before the mere memory, of her ancestors, merely because Catholicism and Protestantism do not include that particular rite? The Chinese worship as a goddess the woman reputed to have taught them cotton-spinning; but is that greatly different from the growing veneration which the West will show to Whitney, Watt, and Edison? To the Chinese the family is not formed simply by its living members, but by the ensemble of the dead, the living, and the future individuals of the same stock. The religious and social unity is not, therefore, the perishable and passing individual, but the immortal and

permanent family. The most ardent disbeliever in the ecclesiastical form of immortality can readily believe himself immortal through an unbroken line of forebears and descendants. By Chinese reckoning the individual himself does not exist; he has no rights, but only duties. He is only a link in an infinite chain reaching back into the prehistoric past and stretching on into the unfathomable future. Once one catches a breath of this feeling, it is easy to understand why even the most modernized Chinese feels he must take a concubine if he cannot beget children otherwise, that he must even renounce Christianity, if he has been converted to it, in order to keep his family line intact; for it is not merely ancestor-worship which keeps its hold on him, but that form of immortality which one feels in an endless family. In fact it would not be hard to adduce arguments that the missionaries are wrong in trying to eradicate this Chinese characteristic.

The American who roams far and wide in China with the avowed intention of reporting on conditions there as fully as a rather generous space permits would be lacking in plain honesty, to say nothing of moral courage, if he passed over in virtual silence the question of missions. Though he puts it off as long as possible, even though he pleads the excuse that he has no ax to grind on one side or the other, being without a religious strain in his make-up, hence with only an academic interest in all religions, Christianity included, and that the subject has often been voluminously treated by far abler heads, he must bring the missionaries into the picture, if only to thank them for their unbounded and delightful hospitality. For missions and missionaries are a distinct and conspicuous phase of present-day China.

There seems to be a general opinion in the United States that there are two or three hundred missionaries in little isolated groups living a life of semi-martyrdom throughout China. Almost universal surprise greets the information that there are at least ten thousand Western missionaries in that land, about sixty-five hundred of them Protestants of I wish I could tell you how many sects, more than thirteen hundred Catholics, and an unknown number of the Russian-Greek faith, besides a scattering of others who scarcely fit any pigeonhole. There is not a province, hardly a city, without foreign resident missionaries, a fact at which any American, almost any Caucasian, traveling far and wide in the former empire cannot but be delighted, if only for purely selfish reasons. Without them he would grow more than weary of the constant discomforts of Chinese inns, instead of often enjoying such hospi-

tality as is vouchsafed him in few other distant lands; but for their unselfish assistance he would frequently be hard put to it to make suitable arrangements for the next stage of his journey, and he would be deprived of much valuable information on things Chinese. As it is, he is assured of not infrequently breaking what would otherwise be an endless and at times almost unendurable contact with a race it is impossible incessantly to admire, by meeting those who are almost always splendid specimens of his own people.

If I am not mistaken a majority of the missionaries in China, certainly of the Protestants, are American and a very large plurality of them are of the English-speaking nations. Yet it is not merely our givers to foreign missions who are under the impression that our missionaries are deeply to be pitied because they are out in a hostile, unpleasant land, living like pioneers, enduring hardships, disappointments, and occasional violence. The truth is far from that. If at least 90 per cent of the missionaries in China do not live in greater bodily and material comfort than those same individuals could have had if they had remained at home, whether as "evangelists" or in any other capacity, then I will eat the rest of this chapter without salt or dressing.

Time was, in some cases not so long ago, when the missionary, especially of the far interior, pioneered, roughed it, underwent the real hardships of living with and as the Chinese. Perhaps there are a dozen or a score of missionaries in China who still do live so, from choice, whim, or because they are opening up new territory; and there are men and women, by no means in the majority, who still "itinerate" among their flocks, undergoing such hardships as one would on an occasional camping-trip at home. But the overwhelming majority of foreigners, particularly of Americans, "in mission work" in China, live in what is a palace among the dwellings of those they are seeking to benefit and a mansion alongside the simple cottage they would probably have occupied at home, or compared to the dwellings of a great many contributors to foreign missions. Instead of adapting themselves to the land they hope to "evangelize," or at least adapting its architecture to some of the simpler forms of dwellings in which they could still live in comparative comfort yet inconspicuously, the missionaries "in the field" and the boards at home alike seem to vie with each other and their rivals in building up enormous establishments, often out of all keeping with the community in which they are situated, —great three-story foreign houses with every modern convenience and many of the luxuries, infinitely better than the wealthiest merchant or

the chief magistrate in their district can afford, in vast roomy compounds compared to which the Chinese round about are living forty deep. Often these establishments are outside the walls on quiet hill-sides far from the madding throng of those they have come to succor, looking to the humble town itself like the feudal castle of medieval times under the protection of which the mere common people huddled.

Nor, now that we are bent on telling the bitter truth, is this by any means all. It is not uncommon to find a missionary couple rattling around in a big two-story foreign house within a large compound, when they could easily rent part of their over-generous accommodations to Europeans only too anxious for the opportunity, and thereby get some of the money they must win from the pious at home by stories of their sufferings "in the field." There are summer-places by mountain or sea where all the missionaries in China can live like lords in manorial parks; the few who still pioneer in the far interior are few indeed compared to the crowds of them who dwell together like suburban millionaires in and about the great cities near the coast, where not even ample social intercourse with their own race is lacking. Nor is want of this in minor stations the hardship some of us might fancy it, for missionaries come largely from our drear little inland towns where there is no "kick" in life anyway, so that they are not losing much in this respect even if social life appealed to them. Besides, "conferences" in which most of the workers scattered about China, or the various large divisions of China, meet to "pep up" one another, to drive away the blues that may result from too long steady association with the Chinese, make traveling expenses a large item among almost all sects. Though it is comfortable enough for the common run of us, it is almost a rare missionary family that is now obliged to cross the Pacific in second class; I believe the contention is that by going first a missionary not only raises his calling to a higher social level but is more likely to meet persons capable of being influenced to financial advantage! Even the American missionary's salary may not be large by our commercial standards, nor by any means as generous as those of the business communities in China, but it is usually ample for comfortable living there. The fact that some put all they can save from their earnings back into "the work" is beside the point; most of us except medical specialists and captains of industry have to pay our charities out of our own pockets.

Women in particular find life in China "fascinating." Not the least of the fascinations is the complete absence of any servant problem,

as we use the term at home. Their Chinese ways may at times be a trial, but the most lowly missionary has servants and helpers enough to completely forget, if he chooses, every form of manual labor, from shoveling his own coal to blacking his own shoes. Life in China has certain unfortunate effects on foreign men; it is worse still on the general run of foreign women. The lady who boasts that she "never has to go into the kitchen from one year's end to the other" is not in the minority; and not a few kitchens show it. She thinks she will make her freedom from household drudgery a chance to indulge in more intellectual activities, but she does not always do so. Whatever their reasons for it, the mission boards do well to insist that as far as possible the wives as well as the husbands shall engage in missionary work. During their first "term" some missionaries may think they are undergoing real hardships, or at least serious inconveniences, and now and again one does not come back from the seventh-year "furlough." But when they find that the cost of feeding a servant at home, to say nothing of wages, probably amounts to more than the combined cost of the half-dozen they have in China, the "fascination" soon reasserts itself. That the position of importance they hold among their converts, if not among the Chinese in general, much greater than the commonplace one most of them hold back home, the freedom accorded them under the rights of extraterritoriality, which virtually makes them subject to no law except the rules of the home board and their own consciences, are among the "fascinations," goes without saying.

Though they may scarcely be conscious of it, there is no doubt that the comforts and their high standing in China add to the glowing sensation of "saving souls," curing bodies, or teaching the East what they conceive to be the best of the West, to keep many missionaries at it, even if it does not bring some of them out to the mission field in the first place. The missionaries in China are literally handicapped in their work by the comfort in which they live. "This man cannot be holy or a great teacher," say the Chinese; "he is too rich." In the East poverty, not cleanliness, is the handmaid of godliness. In the West poverty is the only real offense; in the Orient it is an asset. Disinterestedness being rare among the Chinese, most of them believe that the missionaries have some ulterior motive; they conclude that they are wealthy, which by Chinese standards they are, or that they come to China because they can gather there more of this world's goods than they could at home, which is not without its grain of truth. The result



is that to the mass of the Chinese Christianity is not merely a foreign religion but a rich man's religion.

Now, I do not blame the missionaries for living in comfort. No man bred in the West can live permanently like the Chinese and maintain his health, or at least his highest efficiency. What I protest against is the attitude of martyrdom which so many missionaries assume, or permit their sponsors at home to assume. Perhaps it is not intentional; I have no doubt that in many cases it is not even conscious. But when "the board" virtually asks its workers to imply it, when a man returning on "furlough" is warned not to mention in his talks in quest of funds the tiled bath-rooms in the mission houses, the high morality of mission work borders on the low plane of jesuitical sophistry, of making the end justify the means. Let them say frankly to the pious widow who is contributing her hard-giving mite to "convert the heathen" that a large proportion of it will be spent in the "overhead" of good salaries; that missionary travel under the best, or at least under very comfortable, conditions will eat up a lot more of it; that the personal comfort of those "in the field" will also be subtracted from it; and that of what remains far more will go to giving a schooling to boys and girls, some of whose parents or relatives could better afford to pay for it than can the widow, and in furnishing those students living conditions such as they have never approached before and probably never will again, and my protests cease. Above all let them drop the cant about the "hardships" of mission work, including such expressions as "furlough" and "in the field," more worthy of the Salvation Army than of well-fed, well-housed men and women working under no greater hardships than the average of us; tell the widow that the missionaries are living in more comfort than she because it is essential not only to health and efficiency but necessary in order to attract in sufficient numbers the grade of workers the work calls for, and I have nothing more to say on the point.

This much admitted, there are certain drawbacks to life in China that might perhaps honestly be cited under the heading of hardships. Sometimes, particularly in the far interior, there are no fit companions for one's children, no schooling but that which the father or mother can give, so that they grow up *gauche* and diffident for want of a developing environment; and rather early in life the parents must part more or less permanently with the children by sending them off to school many days distant from the station, even back to the homeland. With servants to spare and an old-world view of manual labor, mission

children suffer some of the misfortunes of those of rich parents at home; there is somewhat more danger of disease among the youngsters, though on the whole the foreign children in China are rosy-cheeked and as rarely carried off or crippled for life by dread epidemics as at home, while they escape almost entirely the myriad dangers of our streets and the youthful Western immoralities of the day. Every American Protestant mission station of size has good physicians and ample hospital facilities for its workers and their families—and it is not beside the mark to mention that treatment is either free or at a small fraction of what they would have to pay at home. Parents must use more constant care, perhaps, and one suspects that some missionaries have sacrificed their children to a zeal for “the work” which might have been better spent in the interests of their own offspring; one now and then gets the feeling that they are too resigned to “acts of God” that on closer examination might prove to be merely their own sins of omission.

The power of the Chinese of assimilating all who come in long contact with them is well known; as some writer has put it, “China is a sea that salts everything that flows into it.” Even missionaries are more or less absorbed by their environment in the interior of China; indeed, I am not sure but that the Chinese have as much effect on the missionaries as the missionaries have on the Chinese. Some of them lose all Western sense of the value of time. Living among an essentially courteous people, they get to be polite at the expense of their own convictions. Instead of setting a good example even at the risk of a possible loss of good will, many an older missionary will wash his face in the same water his Chinese pastor-host has used, drink out of the same cup even when the edge of it is black with repeated lack of washings, lest he antagonize his host by seeming impolite. There is a certain virtue in being a Roman in Rome, but it can be overdone. Many foreigners in constant contact with the Chinese get what might be called, for want of a better name, China-itis, or tropicalitis—they cannot keep their minds on one thing for the length of a sentence; if there is something that must be done at once, they run about, mentally if not physically, in all directions except the right one. Some become permanently rattle-minded; they say the same thing over and over—as one must to impress a thing upon the Chinese of the masses—not merely to one another but to a stray foreigner, shouting in their discussions as they have to do in dealing with coolies, and probably change their minds two or three times in the process, so that the final result is like a code of laws with countless amendments. Some become as incapable

of making a quick, clear decision as our old army officers, accustomed since youth to "passing the buck." This I should number among the real hardships of being a missionary in China, but one does not hear it mentioned to mite-giving widows at home.

But the estimated twenty-five million "Mex" dollars which Americans yearly contribute to mission and philanthropic work in China are not, of course, all made up of widows' mites. The larger givers cannot but be aware, one suspects, that missionaries in such places as China, India, and Africa are a good business investment, that they have probably opened up more territory to, and caused greater demand for, American goods than all other efforts combined. The impression that "big business" and missions, particularly American missions, walk hand in hand is enhanced by the allocation of the whole Chinese mission field to the different denominations. Among them competition at times seems as keen, sometimes as bitter, as in purely commercial business, and any sect is outlawed which refuses to abide by this division of territory similar to that of the New World by sixteenth-century popes. Thus the Seventh-Day Adventists are not on the calling list of any other Protestant missionaries in China. I remember stopping one night in the heart of Honan at a town where the British have an old and dusty but not ineffectual mission inside the city, and American Adventists have a very modern hospital, schools, and the rest in a large compound outside the walls. But though even the new-comers had been there more than ten years, though the two groups are the only foreigners resident for hundreds of miles around, they had never been inside one another's compounds. When illness befell one of the Britishers, he went up to Peking or down to Hankow to be treated, never to the establishment outside the walls. The Adventists seemed open to advances, but the Sunday-keeping sects will not extend the fraternal hand to "people who come into our own territory and tell our converts that they cannot get to heaven unless they make Saturday instead of Sunday their Sabbath." No doubt this dreadful heresy is partly the cause of the ostracism of the Adventists throughout China, but one gets the impression that if the Sunday believers could be absolutely frank they would admit, at least to themselves, that their feelings are exactly those of the traveling salesman who finds a rival poaching on what he has long considered his private preserve, and "knocking" his line of goods among his hitherto satisfied customers.

If the breach between Saturday and Sunday is so great, there is naturally no intercourse whatever, except in the case of a few broad-

minded sinners, with the "Papists" who often hold forth in the same towns. One can have friends among the Buddhist priesthood much more safely than among the dreadful representatives of Rome. The gulf is more wide and complete there than between the missionaries and the "business men," which term commonly includes all foreign residents who earn their living in China without including grace before meat as a part of their duties. Old missionary ladies pronounce the words, anent some daughter of the mission flock, "Oh, *she* married a business man!" so that it rimes exactly with Mrs. Grundy's remarks on some wayward daughter of respectability who has gone "on the streets." No doubt there is some truth in the assertion that the missionary should not jeopardize his teachings and put the stamp of approval on a gambling, blaspheming commissioner of customs or of posts who spends his evenings calling upon his "boy" for whisky and soda—in pidgin-English at that, though he has spent twenty years in the country—by meeting him socially or crossing chop-sticks with him. But there is something amusing, if nothing more, in an ardent young American or Britisher striving to save the almond-eyed souls about him while not so much as offering a bit of companionship to the young man from his home town who, if the missionaries are right, is in imminent peril of embarking on the greased toboggan to future and not very distant damnation.

"For a few Catholic priests, a few nuns humbly sharing the poverty of the Chinese," says a French publicist, "how many (Protestant) missionaries I found luxuriously installed with their wives and their children, living in China as in the land of their origin, even more largely, to recompense their exile. Except among the poorest classes conversions are rare and precarious," he goes on, "yet it is only conversions that can justify the maintenance of the costly propaganda of these people living too fatly on their religion become a trade and a profitable profession. At any price they must justify their presence by the number of proselytes, just as the traveling salesman must justify his salary and expenses by the number of his orders, and it is by untying the purse that they obtain them if other means fail."

Monsieur probably did not mean to imply that Protestant missionaries actually pay money for converts; he was hinting at something akin to the support of amateur athletes in some of our colleges, and, except that he is not justified in dismissing the Catholics from the indictment, there is a certain truth in his implications. Missions in China are far from self-supporting, though there are missionaries who

insist they both could and should be, not so much to relieve the giver at home as because the churches of China will never become genuinely Chinese as long as they are subsidized by the West. Barely 20 per cent of the up-keep, to say nothing of the original cost, of the average Protestant mission station is paid by the Chinese—and about that amount goes to Chinese officials in taxes and less legitimate forms of graft; hence the widows' mites help also toward the financing of civil wars! In a general assembly of missionaries at Chefoo a few years ago it was officially announced that there was one conversion a year for each foreign missionary in China, at a cost of \$1500 gold per convert, and that about 20 per cent of these were missionary servants, in other words, very probably "rice Christians."

Naturally all this strikes a European Catholic as a wasteful form of propaganda. The Eastern linking of poverty and godliness is more native to the Catholic than to the Protestant—on the surface and in the person of the humble individual priest. It is true that compared to the Protestant missionary with his family and all the comforts of home, his salaried year of "furlough" every seven years, his frequent "conferences," the priest with his often poorly adapted native house and his orders to stay on unbrokenly until death or senility overtakes him, does not lead a very merry existence. But to the detached observer the Catholic priests in China seem to be doing little real good compared to the Protestant missionaries. They maintain few hospitals and have no educational system worthy the name, but spend their time mainly in saying masses, confessing their adherents, and teaching and practising the general hocus-pocus of their faith, things very important perhaps from the purely Romanist point of view, but seeming to the mere outsider no great improvement on the doings in Chinese temples. Nor is it beside the point to mention that the *Yeh-ssu-t'ang*, or "Jesus Church," holds some of the most valuable properties in Chinese cities, and that if statistics were available it would probably be found that the flow of money is in the opposite direction than in the case of the Protestants. Notably in the far northwest the Catholics have whole towns, which their priests virtually rule, and there are still reminders of the pre-Boxer days when the priest had official standing equal to the highest official in whatever city he happened to inhabit. On the whole they are more modest to-day, and to the credit of their rivals be it said that the Protestants do not interfere much in lawsuits and other governmental matters in which their followers are involved, though the temptation to drop a quiet word into some official's ear is

sometimes too great to be borne, and some of them have perhaps too often made their compounds places of refuge for the Chinese and their worldly goods.

There is obviously a close connection between missionary work and education in China. While the Flowery Kingdom for many centuries held learning in higher repute than did the world at large, and only the scholar was eligible to the highest offices, there never was any general education in the democratic sense. The missionaries are largely responsible for bringing this idea to China. The first germ of modern education and of missionary work was about equally British and American, for when Robert Morrison came from England to Canton in 1807 he was obliged to stay with the American consul, because the East India Company would not allow any Englishman to remain unless he were engaged in trade. From that seed great things have grown, leading more or less directly to the establishment in 1905 of the Ministry of Education and the beginning of the Chinese attempt to reorganize the old examination-hall type of scholarship into something like a Western system.

Unable in many cases to pry open any other door for their avowed plan of "evangelizing the heathen," the missionaries to China took up educational and medical work as the only visible way of eventually "bringing the sinners to Jesus." Perhaps that was the only possible beginning, and of all the inducements they found that the teaching of English, the precious tongue of commerce, brought the most "seekers after knowledge." At first even that was often not enough. When Robert Mateer started his mission in the heart of Shantung, he paid students to come to school to him; now the big establishment that has grown up about his grave far outside the walls where he was forced to build has to turn away applicants ready to pay for board and tuition. The schools brought the seekers, to be sure, but the seeking is not in most cases a seeking after that knowledge for which pious widows at home give their mites. These would be surprised to know that they are probably making more translators for foreign firms than Christians.

There seem to be about half a million students in the Protestant mission schools of China, but by no means all of these even profess to be converts, with the result that the "heathen" get much of the material substance without the spirit for which missions were avowedly established, and that the moral improvement is not commensurate with

the efforts. Many missionaries now see that if the schools were to be merely an opening wedge for spreading Christianity, it is a mistake to offer so much education, particularly so much English, for then the graduate is more likely to look for a commercial position on the strength of his greater or less knowledge of China's second tongue than to go out into the villages to teach and "evangelize." Moreover, the Chinese seem less susceptible to conversion after they know the foreigner and his ways and his language. Some workers in the mission fields go so far as to say that there should not be any mingling of the economic with the religious, not even the teaching of cross-stitch or embroidery to women in need of augmenting the family income, since it brings that many more self-seekers and increases the number of "rice Christians." Certainly it is not a pure form of evangelization; probably neither Buddhists nor Mohammedans would stoop to it.

"Rice Christians" are not confined to poor coolies who hope to get enough to fill their bellies by professing the faith of the foreigners; thousands of Chinese students in mission schools are just as truly "rice Christians" of education. Moreover, a few years in mission schools or in great universities, with dormitories such as probably a majority of our American college students are not enjoying to-day, living and learning under conditions much better than they have in their Chinese homes, tend to make a kind of pauper of them, though neither they nor the missionaries seem often to realize it. There is a danger of making such beneficiaries of Western charity "rice Christians" for life, and if the truth were known many a mission-school graduate has probably gone out as a pastor because that was the line of least resistance, because he knew no other way to put his hard preparation at the disposal of his family, and has so long inured himself to pass for a good Christian in order to get the material benefits thereto appertaining that he has convinced himself as well as the world about him of something which in reality is not genuine. So far the contribution of Christian missions has been at least as much educational as moral, which may be well, for as the West presents religious dogma with one hand and science with the other the Chinese have been canny enough to apply the science to the dogmas. The result is by no means what the average contributor to mission funds thinks it is.

Of late there have been numerous signs of a revolt against missionary education in China. Perhaps the most radical example of it was

the list of resolutions passed at a recent China Educational Conference. Boiled down, the contention was that the Chinese Government should regain control of all educational activities, "because it is an exclusive right of any government to say what and how its people shall be taught. Each country has its own peculiar temperament and ideals, with which foreign schools cannot completely harmonize. Moreover, the foreign schools buy the affections of our people, making them really colonists of those countries, so that the national spirit of independence that should be first in the student's mind is impaired, and"—here the missionaries rose in wrath—"the administrators of the mission schools are either preachers of religion, or they occupy their positions for the purpose of inculcating political ideas; education is not their real aim."

To correct these more or less justly criticized conditions the conference recommended that:

All schools and educational agencies established by foreigners should report to the Government for registration, and everything pertaining to schools should be brought into harmony with national and provincial regulations before they are permitted to register. All teachers employed in foreign schools must come under the control of an inspector appointed by the local magistrate, and have the qualifications required by the Ministry of Education. Foreign schools must collect fees in accordance with the scale set by the ministry, and must not exceed that of other private schools in the same district. Pupils graduated from an unregistered school shall not be considered on an equality with the graduates of the national schools when seeking government preferment. Schools not permitted to register by the Government shall be closed after a certain time. Students in the foreign schools shall take care to observe all the festivals, proprieties, and manners determined for the regulation of national schools. Foreigners shall not use their schools for the propagation of religion; all such educational agencies shall, within a fixed time, be taken over by the nation, and after the foregoing shall have become law no foreigner shall be permitted to establish educational agencies in China.

On the face of it most of these demands—which are of course on a par with the demand for the return of concessions and the abolishing of extraterritoriality, and indeed dependent upon the latter—are justifiable, with the exception of the debatable question as to whether a government should be permitted to specify what can and what cannot be taught people who are not merely governed by, but responsible for any possible improvements in, their government. But the mission schools are better educational institutions than the general run of government schools, and it is difficult to legislate people out of getting the most they can for their money. Moreover, there are not educational facilities enough, government and mission schools combined, for one



tenth of the children of China. Just as soon as the government can supply equally good education, in sufficient quantity, the mission schools will probably tend to eliminate themselves, just as concessions and extra-territoriality will disappear with the present necessity for them.

The Chinese who attend mission schools do not in most cases do so because of any desire to espouse the religion or the political or other ideals of the foreigners, but because they get what they consider a better or a more useful schooling, the only schooling that is being carried on uninterruptedly to-day in China, since almost all government and privately supported Chinese educational institutions are short of funds, or short of their actual buildings because of the military situation. So long as the government schools have accommodations for about one per cent of the population, there is no good argument for driving out the mission schools, even though they turned all their pupils into Christians, which is by no means imminent. Another argument of the missionaries is exactly that of our Catholic parochial schools, that the children of their converts must be taught under Christian conditions. Were I a Chinese father I should adopt the doctrine—though whether I should be able to live up to it is another question—that the government schools are *my* schools, and that I should therefore do everything in my power, including the sending of my own children to them, to help improve them; it is exactly the same problem as between the private and government schools in our own country. But the Chinese is rarely public-spirited in the Western sense, and he can scarcely be blamed if he prefers to have his children learn some of those things which are not taught in the government schools and leave unlearned some of the things which the mission schools thus far seem to have been somewhat more successful in eradicating.

Akin to the growing prejudice against the mission schools is the increasing talk against sending Chinese students abroad for their education. In 1847, say the opponents, when Yung Wing, the father of all Chinese returned students, brought home on a sailing-vessel a degree from Yale, there was good reason for leaving China to be educated. Now conditions have changed, and when both sides are footed up the balance is in favor of home education. Yet a Chinese inquirer finds that the chief desire of most Chinese students in government as well as mission middle schools is to complete their studies abroad. They ground that desire on the belief that their social standing will be raised, their earning capacity enlarged, their opportunities for occupation enhanced, their ability to render service to China

increased. "Some even go so far as to invent the ridiculous fallacy that they can get better wives!" But too many of them learn the latest dances rather than more academic subjects; they are spoiled by the attention bestowed upon them in America or Europe, not realizing that it is offered them as a nation rather than as individuals; they bring back discontent, a foreign viewpoint not fitted to the land of their birth, and in many cases never succeed in reorientalizing themselves. In the minds of the populace the title "returned student" has an amazing sound, but brings with it far too much personal dignity of the wrong kind, an unwillingness to start at the bottom which in many cases causes these honorable personages eventually utterly to disregard the particular goals they were so anxious to attain before their coveted voyage. The returned student often disdains his country, complains that the environment does not favor his new talents, forgetting that circumstances should not mold the man but that the man should mold his circumstances. He says that his home town is dirty, uninspiring, and takes up his abode in some treaty-port, never thinking of reconstructing the town himself, but leaving the task to some one else. If he is asked to conduct a given institution, he replies, "Why, in America or Europe they do it in such and such a way"; he is entirely at a loss to see that he is in China, and that such a way does not apply there. "To hear the opinions of them at home and abroad one might think that the salvation of China hinges chiefly on the returned students," say the opponents of education abroad, "whereas when one considers the service they have wrought one can only heave a sigh at the time and money spent on them. From now on," this growing element concludes, "China must look, not to her returned students, but to her home-bred ones."

Popular education has progressed in China since the abandoning of the old examination-halls, and the turning over in many cases of their spacious grounds to modern government schools. It is progressing to-day, even though China is tottering on the brink of political, social, and economic bankruptcy. In many of the provincial capitals and larger cities modern buildings have been specifically constructed as schools, their furniture closely copied, where it is not actually imported, from Grand Rapids—at a fraction of the cost. Many other structures, such as Manchu palaces and yamen, temples, and the like, have been refitted as schools. But the educational system of China is not yet democratic; like that of many South American countries,

it is top-heavy. Chinese propagandists, unofficial spokesmen at least, eager to give their homeland the best possible "face" before the outside world, sometimes try to make that world believe, without actually saying so, that China already has that universality of education which republics are reputed to require for their continued well-being. What they mean, when they are not deliberately deceiving, is that there are schools enough, particularly higher schools, for those who have always belonged to the educated classes. The mass of the population has been considered of no importance in such a matter for so many generations that your educated Chinese, completely ignoring them unconsciously, can honestly claim, in so far as his conception of the term goes, that there is universal education, when a hundred million boys and girls of the mere peasant and coolie classes do not know what the word "school" is meant to signify.

There are a few places where parents are officially told to send their boys to school, and that is probably as near compulsory universal education as China will come for some time, for all her high-sounding constitutional phrases. The "model governor" of Shansi Province, as well as a few more local rulers, has made a beginning of widespread education in restricted areas, not merely by establishing schools, but by erecting in his capital and the principal towns huge boards bearing the thousand characters which it is hoped in time to teach even the lowest coolies. A few private Chinese enterprises are working toward the same end; a Chinese woman recently started an association that is to sell or give the illiterate everywhere a book containing these thousand most essential characters. If one member of the family or shop force—often the same thing in China—can read, he is urged and helped to become the teacher of the others; if none can, efforts are made to induce or force one to go to school. These, however, are but drops in the great Chinese bucket, and all such efforts are naturally hampered by the difficulties inherent in a written language which it requires the average child, to say nothing of un-schooled adult, six to eight years merely to learn to read.

Though missionaries especially—one might almost say exclusively—have been trying for nearly a century to get the Chinese to adopt some simpler form of writing, some alphabetical construction in place of the fifty thousand characters that must each be learned by a pure act of memory, success has not yet crowned their efforts. Not only is the much advertised new Chinese script of thirty-nine letters certainly less in use than is the knowledge of shorthand in the United

status to which learning as compared to hand labor has dropped in the West is beginning to show its head in China. At any rate the teacher there is no longer the revered being he was for so many centuries. Not merely in government but in missionary schools the strike has become a favorite weapon in the hands of the students. It is in keeping with the general revolt against missionary education to have a group of young cubs rise and demand that a teacher with a higher degree, or equipment of a more costly sort, be provided, when they are indebted mainly or entirely to the charity of contributors overseas for what they already enjoy.

The new generation is going to the dogs, runs the cry through the older one in China, as with us; there is no filial piety left, hence no obedience to teachers or officials. "The trouble is," said one of the few provincial governors educated abroad, "that the students in the China of to-day have no discipline because the parents fail to discipline them; the common people think the scholar class is infallible, and the moment a youth starts to a higher school he is accepted as of that class, and the authorities are afraid of being assassinated if they say anything." The old pride and standing of scholarship are now shown, not in the dignity of real learning, but in the insolent and overbearing manners of middle school and college students; the old classics are neglected and little learned in their place. Chinese students do not know Chinese history, not even the name of so recent an emperor as Hsien Feng, husband of the Empress Dowager of notorious memory, which is perhaps not worth knowing, but probably synonymous with ignorance on important matters. Naturally with the country itself in governmental chaos the rising generation is not going to be unusually law-abiding.

It is a confirmation of the old adage about the juxtaposition of familiarity and contempt, rather than of one of the slogans of our world-wide peace-workers, to find that the Chinese are almost always more rude toward foreigners in proportion to their relations with us. Students, than whom no one in China perhaps has more reason to thank foreigners, are often those who show the strongest anti-foreign feelings. The governor above quoted asserted that this as well as the antichristian movement among students throughout China is largely a pose; but one wonders, and muses on the reasons for this attitude. No member of the human family loves those who show him charity, and at least the mission student can hardly fail to know that he is indebted to Westerners. Returned students are reputed often to be

most anti-foreign of all, though perhaps less open in showing it. Have they been ill treated abroad? Rather the contrary, it seems, in most cases. Have they seen too much of us at home? Possibly. Some ascribe their dislike to a peculiar psychological twist: knowing that the laws of most Western countries make it a misdemeanor to keep pigs as the mass of the Chinese themselves live, the returned student cannot but realize that the foreigner in his country must look down upon his own people, and his hatred is a mixture of resentment at our knowledge and envy at foreign good fortune. Others contend that the returned student comes home expecting a good position of importance, and finding himself lucky to get one as a clerk or underling at less than he spent abroad, by a curious Oriental twist of reasoning such as makes the Hindu educated in England damn the Government because it does not offer him the white-collar sinecure he expected, he tries to take his dissatisfaction out on such of his benefactors as are within reach.

The appearance of the student in political affairs in China is a recent phenomenon and one of the blessings which that country owes the West. The students are not only in closer contact with Western ideas, but with the exception of factory workers in a few large cities where foreigners are numerous, they are the only class of Chinese who are organized in large collective bodies. Hence their tendency to lead in anti-government and anti-foreign demonstrations—more exactly, to push, since it is rarely they but the simple though inflammable workers of the masses whom they thrust to the front when their agitation reaches the point of action. Personally I saw no great evidence of a general anti-foreign feeling in China, though this may be due to lack of any real basis of comparison, since I had had no previous Chinese travel worthy the name. Old missionaries, to say nothing of the more cynical business element, say that they can feel this anti-foreign sentiment in many subtle ways, such as a decrease in politeness; but is that not more or less world-wide? It may be that I am unduly prejudiced in favor of the Chinese and too little suspect an uprising similar to that of 1900. But agitators are a small percentage even in the treaty-ports and almost unknown in the interior. The great mass of the people do not even know there are “unequal” treaties, that there was a Washington Conference; how then can they resent the holding of concessions and the privileges of extraterritoriality? Many old foreign residents insist that there will never be violence similar to that of Boxer days, that the Chinese of to-day are so much nearer

the outside world, socially, economically, even politically, that they have advanced so much in general humanity since those dark times, that, add the missionaries in particular, the leaven of the Christian work that has been going on all over the former empire of late has wrought so widely, that any such general attack on the tens of thousands of Caucasians scattered throughout the country is not to be feared. They insist that there is really a growing friendliness between the best types of Chinese and foreigners, though many of them admit that the foreigner may eventually be driven out of China for all that. That Americans seem to be in somewhat better odor than some other nationalities will not imbue those of us who have more than once been asked if we were Japanese with the notion that we may escape any such general fate.

There have been recent movements both in the United States and England to make what remains of the Boxer indemnity fund available not merely for sending Chinese students to America and England, but for establishing universities in China of equal standing with those abroad, founding museums and public libraries, and exchanging professors between the East and the West. The "Boxer college," Tsing Hua, a few miles out of Peking, was an earlier American move in this direction, and has some testimony to offer on the subject. In theory Tsing Hua has students from every province, according to the amount each pays toward the returned indemnity. But Americans who teach there say that the students are prone to be the sons or nephews of Tutchuns and others in high political power, that notices of competitive examinations for admission to Tsing Hua are often posted on the inside of yamen doors, so that only those on the inside can see them. They say the upper fourth of the students are excellent, but that there are some dreadful dullards among the rest—yet all of them go to American colleges, at least when funds are available. The new auditorium at Tsing Hua, which has an appearance in keeping with the mint of money that was spent on it, after the plans of an American firm of architects, but the acoustic properties of which are so poor that it is virtually useless, is cited as an example of going abroad for something that can better be done at home.

Our commercial attaché makes the excellent suggestion that "while we are sending missions and spending millions in our efforts to educate the East to know the West, we are doing nothing to train the West to know the East. The remarkably rich civilizations of Asia have not been invited to share their treasures with us, but to give up

everything of their own for some Western substitute. How much more to the interests of both Americans and Chinese would have been an arrangement whereby a portion of the Boxer indemnity we have returned were utilized to eradicate some of our deplorable ignorance on the history, customs, traditions, and economics of the Chinese! For were not the Boxer troubles in part due to a lack of understanding on the part of foreigners of the essentials of Chinese civilization? Would it not surprise a large part of the American public, who know the Chinese only as laundrymen, vegetable venders, and chop-suey purveyors, to be told that China has produced scholars, artists, artisans, and statesmen whose contributions to the intellectual, spiritual, and material advances of the human race are stupendous?" Certainly it would surprise our astute and inventive congressmen to know that nearly nine centuries ago a reformer got a Chinese emperor to try out, among other schemes, an income tax, but that "great difficulty was experienced in ascertaining the real income of the people, and the tax met with violent opposition." In fact China has invented, tried out, and either thrown away or incorporated into her scheme of life many a thing which the West is only now hailing as a new offspring of its own fertile brain.

But we have wandered far afield and discourteously left our probably quite innocent missionaries bored in the dock. However much some of the great missionary establishments in China may resemble the plants of efficient "big business," the workers in the field are seldom thinking of the possible advantage of missions to business. It is a platitude to say that the missionaries are of many sorts, even as the people from whom they spring, of all social classes, from the sons and daughters of wealthy and cultured old families to those whose greeting takes the ultra-rural form of, "Wall, I guess you 'll want to come in and wash up?" Possibly there are too many of these simple, bucolic souls from the little back-waters of our great land, but that is in keeping with proportions at home. Many a simple soul, burning with the zeal to "save the heathen from hell-fires," or simply eager to benefit his fellow-men, thinks to bring the Chinese a new religion, a whole new philosophy of life, without an inkling of that ancient civilization he is so bent on remaking. The majority, perhaps, are college graduates, well bred, practical, high- and often fair-minded, well grounded in Chinese matters, and fluent in Chinese speech. If they are somewhat more narrow in their view of life than some other

groups of similar size chosen at random in the lands of their origin, partly because of their calling, partly because they could not have taken up such a calling if they had been otherwise, they have other virtues to offset this. On the whole one rarely finds a piece of real literature, except the Bible, in mission homes or in the foreign book-stores of such places as Kuling, though one will find printed sanctimonious junk without end, almost as atrociously written as the average contribution to Christian hymnals. Not a few missionaries seem to need the livening up that comes from contact with broader art and literature without the pointed moral of the Sunday-school leaflet, more effort to keep up-to-date on general thought, even though much of it may turn out later not to have been thought at all. There is a growing tendency toward that, and there are many individuals who could hold their own in any intellectual community, along with men and women who would not stand out as very large frogs in the smallest puddle anywhere. In the main the missionaries are neither fossils nor frumps—though fashions change while one is beyond the reach of them. They practise the minor as well as the major virtues: they rarely dance; only a few scattered renegades among them ever touch horrid tobacco; none of them will so much as sip liquor at a Tuchun's banquet—overlooking the fact that immense quantities of coffee or, thanks to British influence, gallons of the strongest tea may bring much the same result. But if the missionary body is below the average in broad-mindedness—which I make no pretense of having proved, and of which I am not even entirely convinced—it is correspondingly above the average group in conscientious morality and the serious purposes of life.

By no means all missionaries give their main attention to training clerks or compradors for the foreign business houses of the concessions. Some of them, some whole sects, confine themselves strictly to "evangelization"; in general the British missions put their stress upon this, as contrasted with the large American establishments, which draw no line on anything that may be of benefit to China and its masses, even the improvement of their ancient agriculture. Yet in another sense the missionaries do not bring economic advance to the Chinese; they buy huge tracts of land in or outside Chinese cities and raise the cost of living for the Chinese, and for themselves. They are prone to complain when the "good old times" they are familiar with, and which they have avowedly been working to improve, show signs of change. They pay the lowest market price for labor, leaving it to the



unregenerate business men to "spoil" the natives by overpayment; many of them seem more interested in getting their charges to heaven intact than in getting them ample food here below. Yet in this matter, too, there are wide differences.

Nor should we overlook the fact that by no means all who go "out to the mission field" are really missionaries, sometimes not even by temperament. Many come merely as teachers, doctors, architects, chemical experts, and gradually take on the missionary exterior from constant missionary surroundings. Others come to save souls and remain to sell oil; not a few sons, and even daughters, of missionaries, by the way, go into the ungodly ranks of business and capitalize at a good price the Chinese they learned as children in the mission compound. Others are merely pricked with the sharp goad of wanderlust, a desire to see strange lands and live among strange peoples, and sometimes honestly mistake this all their lives for the missionary spirit. Few know the real conditions when they come, so that the unexpected pleasures and comforts of life in China keep some in the fold who expected anything but that; others find the work distasteful and conclude they are misfits.

Honest missionaries admit that in few cases do the Chinese throw off all their old superstitions and beliefs; some go so far as to say that no adult ever becomes a real convert, that one may only hope for those caught in childhood. Such things as a mirror or a demon-face over the door, in which the devils that trouble Chinese households shall see themselves and be frightened away, remain even among "Christian" families; many a family professing Christianity still has "only an ancestral tablet"; if idols must be torn down or a marriage or funeral performed without the old forms, the Chinese convert demands that a foreign pastor tear them down, or perform the ceremony; not even a Chinese pastor will do, for it is quite generally admitted that the demons have no power over foreigners, and the foreigners may have some power over the demons, and in any case it will be they and not the Chinese who will suffer for disregarding or stirring up the forces of evil.

The Chinese seem to base their religious practices on the idea that they can do no harm, and they may do some good; and the teachings of missionaries often seem to be taken in the same way. The Celestial is practical in religion, as he is in business; he does not mean to "miss a trick," to "overlook a bet"; so he will examine and perhaps try out

any kind of religion that is offered him, in the hope that one of them may be right. He is like the man who gets his life insured in several different companies, concluding that one of them at least will not fail him, or like the man who speculates in a dozen stocks at a time, trusting that he is guessing right in at least one instance. Listen to the words of Kublai Khan, for example, as reported by Marco Polo—for though it is true that Kublai was not Chinese in blood, he was virtually so in his civilization by the time he came to mount the throne. Upon being asked why he observed the principal Christian festivals, such as Christmas and Easter, as well as those of the Saracens, Jews, and idolaters, Kublai Khan answered:

There are four great prophets who are revered and worshiped by the different classes of mankind. The Christians regard Jesus Christ as their divinity; the Saracens, Mohammed; the Jews, Moses; and the idolaters the most eminent of their idols. I honor and show respect to all four, and invoke to my aid whichever amongst them is in truth supreme in Heaven.

But from the manner in which his Majesty acted toward them, goes on the very Catholic Venetian, it is evident that he regarded the faith of the Christians as the truest and best. Yet, when asked by the Polo brothers why he did not admit this openly, he replied:

Wherefore should I become a Christian? You yourselves must perceive that the Christians of these countries are ignorant, inefficient persons, who do not possess the faculty of performing anything [miraculous]; whereas you see that the idolaters can do whatever they will. They have the power of controlling bad weather and obliging it to retire to any quarter of the heavens; you are witness that their idols have the faculty of speech, and predict to them whatever is required. Should I become a convert to the faith of Christ and profess myself a Christian, the nobles of my court and other persons who do not incline to that religion will ask me what sufficient motives have caused me to receive baptism and to embrace Christianity. What extraordinary powers, they will say, what miracles have been displayed by its ministers? To which I shall not know what answer to make, and I shall be considered by them as laboring under a grievous error, whilst the idolaters, who by means of their profound art can effect such wonders, may without difficulty encompass my death.

But return you to your pontiff [the pope] and request of him in my name to send thither an hundred persons well skilled in your law, who, being confronted with the idolaters, shall have power to coerce them, and showing that they themselves are endowed with similar art, but which they refrain from exercising, because it is derived from the agency of evil spirits, shall compel them to desist from practices of such a nature in their presence. When I am witness of this I shall take them and their religion under an interdict, and shall allow myself to be baptized, and following my example all my nobility will then in like manner receive baptism, and this will be imitated by my subjects in general; so that the Christians in these parts will exceed in number those who inhabit your own country.

A fair proposition, surely; but the pope could not deliver the goods, for his priests were lacking not merely in magic and black art but in mere health and courage; and of the small fraction of the hundred asked for who were ordered to return to the court of Kublai Khan with the Polos some died early in the journey and the others lost their nerve long before it was well begun. It is interesting to speculate on what differences the China of to-day might show if the suggestion had been carried out in full.

If Sun Yat-sen, who put aside his first wife and the mother of his children and took a young, beautiful, and foreign-educated one when it suited him; or Feng Yü-hsiang, who "double-crossed" his military superior on the field of battle, are examples of Christian converts in high places, say the business communities, the sample products of the mission schools are probably not much to boast of, if one could see through them. When 4500 soldiers of the "Christian General" are baptized on a single Sunday, one has some reason to suspect, recalling the words of Kublai Khan, that something else than mere conversion is involved. Judging from the actions of some Chinese Christians, one wonders if many converts do not get Christianity from the missionaries about as exactly as the Chinese mission student retranslated "Rock of Ages" back into English from his Chinese hymnal:

Very old stone split for my benefit,  
Let me absent myself under your fragments.

The missionaries protest that it is unfair to measure the results of mission work by the number of converts; that there are many high officials who are really Christians, but who cannot afford publicly to admit it, because they would lose "face" if not their jobs; that if such men dare not even send their wives to church, they do send their children to Sunday-school, and that by the time the second generation ripens things will be different. The Chinese are a conservative people, they insist, possibly the most conservative race on earth; hence one should not show surprise at the comparative dearth of visible results, at least as measured in genuine converts, of now well over a century of Protestant missions in China. They claim that there are many Christianly-moral Chinese men in the postal, customs, and salt services who are "silent Christians," and that Christian influence seeps far into Chinese life irrespective of actual converts. No doubt they are right; certainly if the missionaries had never come to China no one ever could have found this sign over the door of a club of young men in an interior town who made no more pretense of being Christians than they kept secret their knowledge of mission-school English:

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## EXTRACT FROM CLUB RULES

The Club will not admit concubines or other persons of decayed personality.

There is no doubt that in the mass the missionaries in China are good people diligently engaged in good work; contrasted to the foreign business men, comparing an overworked mission doctor with our bank-raiding medical specialists at home, or even in Shanghai, they are altruists indeed. The chief question rising before one who prides himself on trying to be an impartial observer is how much real good their good work is doing, and why the West should be doing it anyway. Why, asks the man without the missionizing temperament, should the pious at home scrimp themselves to educate one Chinese boy or girl in a thousand, when the result most often is to make him dissatisfied with his surroundings without giving him the power to better them? How can the missionaries help asking themselves what use it is to save or lengthen lives, when it is so obvious that what China needs perhaps most of all is fewer lives, when every amelioration of conditions will only mean the breeding of so many more unneeded people, and their work becomes a kind of interfering with nature's process of meeting the problem of a surplus population? Give the Chinese doubly better living conditions, better economic opportunities, better medical and hospital facilities, and at the end of the process, as Professor Ross puts it, there would be nothing to show for it but twice as many Chinese, no better, no wiser, no happier than before.

No country on earth is more badly in need of birth-control, or self-control in reproductive matters, than China, and almost nowhere is it less in evidence. Though overpopulation is visibly China's greatest curse to-day, and the cause of many of her other ills, the missionaries not only preach little or not at all against it, but, their own economic conditions being in most cases better than they would be at home, they set an example of large families. Bachelorhood is almost as rare as scandal; even when misfortune disrupts a domestic partnership in the mission field the survivor seems to be rather easily consoled, perhaps out of a firm faith in a future meeting; a widow or widower of long duration is a rarity; few memorial arches to "virtuous widows" who refused long to survive a husband, or who devoted the rest of their lives to his memory, are due the missionaries of China.

The missionaries in the field are hampered in more ways than appear on the surface. They are hampered by the boards at home in much the same way as a badly informed State Department or Downing



In his later years the Buddhist monk may become the head of a great monastery, but he rarely entirely loses his Chinese sense of humor and can vary his sanctimonious expression with broad smiles



Instead of the tonsure the Chinese Buddhist novice is marked for monkhood by the burning with great ceremony by means of incense-sticks of twelve round scars in three rows on his scalp



Every city of importance in China has its "temple of hell," where cheerful-faced demons perpetrate atrocious forms of punishment upon the damned under the gaze of a benign-faced judge or chief deity



Bird-footed demons in the gaudiest colors known to the paint-pot are but one of the myriad forms of gods and demons in Chinese temples and monasteries



Street hampers its agents abroad; they are hampered by their personal prejudices and by the dogmas of their sects; they are hampered by the doctrine of treading softly on Chinese prejudices, and sometimes by their own gentle temperaments. They rarely if ever urge the Chinese to level the graves, though that is much more important than it sounds, because it is not a vital matter in getting them to heaven; they never openly preach against foot-binding because in the Chinese mind small feet are closely connected with the sex appeal, so much so that the Catholic missionaries do not ask their proselytes in the confessional, "Have you committed the sin of concupiscence?" but, "Have you looked at the feet of women?" How often I have seen girls with palpably crippled feet attending mission schools, in the face of the statement that only those without bound feet are admitted, and heard the explanation that they are "heathen" girls who cannot unbind entirely, or only day pupils, who cannot be required to unbind, or that "they are only bound a little," though they walk painfully on their heels! The missionaries cannot take up what from the earthly point of view at least is China's most crying need, a reduction in the birth-rate, and suggest the wisdom of keeping each family within reasonable limits, because it is unholy to interfere with the processes of nature. Yet they proceed incontinently to interfere on the other side by saving children whom nature had planned to eliminate by the crude methods that even nature seems to adopt in China.

Yet when all is said and done, whatever faults one may find with mission work, however hard it may be to see just cause for helping those who not merely do not help themselves but often set their faces against being assisted, so that one cannot but wonder where the missionaries themselves get moral gasoline, so to speak, sufficient to keep them going, one looks almost in vain for any other influence for good in the China of to-day. The missionaries are aiding the country in a hundred ways, economically by teaching them new things about agriculture, the occupation of fully four fifths of the population; they are maintaining what, for all their faults, are probably the best schools in China; they seem indeed to be almost the only motive force strong enough to lead the Chinese to take an active interest in Chinese education; they are certainly running the best hospitals, the only ones bringing modern medicine and surgery on any more than an infinitesimal scale, so that without them 95 per cent instead of only about half the population would be completely out of reach of modern medical science; they are building up a nursing profession, doing something for the beggars, the

lepers, the insane, all of whom the Chinese themselves have almost completely ignored beyond allowing them freely to roam at large. Whether or not there is anything to be gained by getting the Chinese people to change from one religion to another; whether or not the "evangelizing of the heathen" of which the exhorter in the little prairie church so often speaks is really taking place, the Christian missionaries are certainly implanting in the minds of some of the Chinese masses ideas of right living as we of the West understand them. On the other hand they may be weakening them and pauperizing their own motive force for improvement, sinking them still further into their national habit of letting some one else do it, teaching them to do as little as possible for their own benefit, in the hope that the enigmatical foreigner will presently come and do it for them.

Personally I do not care an iota what religion, what promise of future reward and threat of future punishment, or what other influence of an altruistic nature brings about better conditions in China, so long as they are brought about. But the present religions of China certainly are doing little worth mentioning in that regard. The only time I ever heard in all China anything like a sermon from a non-Christian source was in a far western town where the proprietor of a tea-house had a gay family altar fitted up in front of his shop on some holiday occasion, and had alternately male and female lecturers talk on good manners, filial piety, and the like. The priests of China certainly have very slight if any influence for good, for improvement in living or in general conditions. Neither Buddhism, Confucianism, nor any other Oriental religion is any longer a motive force in China; in marked contrast to conditions in Tibet on the West, the priesthood has scarcely a hint of power. The best priests have little standing—far less than the missionaries; the mass of them are little more than begging loafers. Those of the Taoist cult are geomancers, diviners, and tellers of good fortune, Taoism to-day being chiefly concerned with demons and malicious spiritual influences. Of the ancient Taoist metaphysics and poetry nothing survives but the universal love of nature and flowers, and the occupation of the priests consists almost entirely in exploiting the credulity of their compatriots. The Buddhists are mainly concerned with saving their own souls; the few priests of the Confucian cult have little to do with the people at large. All religion is conservative, defying innovations; but while Chinese Buddhism and Taoism have chosen to stand still, which of course means to retrograde, time and mankind and the world in general have not; so that the old religions of China

and all that is connected with them appear as dust-laden, broken-down, powerless remnants of a distant past.

Yet there seems to be developing a strong opposition to Christianity, especially among students and the educated classes, by some because they are prejudiced against anything of foreign origin or backing, by others because they see little of the biblical Jesus in Western ways, even of the missionaries. The broader-minded of the latter admit that this is not merely an inevitable but an excellent trend. For a century the West has been trying to instil some of its ideals into the inert masses of China, and one of the chief complaints has been that they did not show patriotism, willingness to sacrifice self for the whole, eagerness to do away with the political corruption that has hung over the country for untold centuries. What more natural than that the first sprout of the seeds of patriotism should take the form of opposition to anything from outside China? Even if they bring about nothing more than a renaissance in China's older religions in opposition to them, who will say that the missionaries have wrought entirely in vain? There exists in China a recently formed "Society of Universal Good," the avowed aim of which is to combine all the good points of "China's five religions,—Taoism, Confucianism, Buddhism, Mohammedanism, and Christianity." It now has adherents all over the country, even in small villages. It goes without saying that the mass of foreign missionaries are violently opposed to this. Some of them are ready to aid in another recent movement, to establish a purely Chinese church, even to combine the principal Protestant sects into a single unity; but they are intransigent stand-patters, uncompromisingly against Christianity combining with any other religion. A few of broadest vision see that there are good things even in the present religions or doctrines of China, but even they will admit them at most only as by-laws of Christianity. The majority seem to wish to keep Christianity what they were brought up to believe, even to the tunes of the hymns. Buddhist priests, to say nothing of members of the new society, welcome and read Christian tracts; it is much as if they were the true seekers after light, willing to listen to any possible solution of the riddle of existence, while the missionaries are so convinced of their own wisdom in guessing it aright that many of them not only resent any one trying to show them any other possibility but militantly attack the beliefs of those who would enlighten them.

"It is essential that the missionary bear in mind constantly that his mission is not to transplant a foreign institution in the land to which

he goes," the advanced mission school reminds us, "but rather to plant there a church through which the genius of the people may express itself, and which shall be in harmony with the particular conditions under which they live. To perpetuate Western ecclesiastical divisions would be deplorable."

Unless you work in a house issuing religious encyclopedias or something of the sort, you would accuse me of gross exaggeration if I asserted that there exist as many Protestant sects as are engaged in mission work in China; hence it is no doubt well that I have not the data at my fingers' ends. But the differences have a tendency to shrink, almost to disappear, out in the field. One meets a "Southern Methodist" married to a "Northern Methodist," nay, even to a "Northern Presbyterian"; I have met "Southern Baptists" who were born and reared in Minnesota, even in Canada. Naturally the Chinese see less reason for these schisms than do the missionaries, and there are hopeful signs of a union of churches that will not only do away with many minor differences but may even create a self-supporting and self-governing Chinese church. Not a few missionaries, as well as many Chinese Christians, are working toward this ideal of a united, de-Westernized church. Thus recently from my host of Chengtu:

The proceedings of the conference were entirely in the Chinese language, and unless a man was unable to speak in that tongue the speeches were not interpreted. The capacity of the Chinese Christians to direct and consult in matters relating to the church, even to oppose the opinions of the missionaries, was fully demonstrated. No foreign flags were seen in the conference hall; foreign delegates and speakers were in the minority, and the whole atmosphere of the conference tried to show that the church is a Chinese organization.

It has by no means become one yet, but the tendency is in that direction, and some day Christianity may be as wide-spread in China as Mohammedanism is to-day; it may even take its place side by side with the other three "doctrines" that mask the real religion of the Chinese masses. That it will supersede all the others, even at some distant future date, I very much doubt; nor can I see any reason that it should. The fact is, if Christianity survives as anything like a general belief in China, it will almost certainly be absorbed and Chinafied, just as Buddhism has been, just as each racial wave of immigrants or conquerors has been. In Nestorian days China almost became Christian, but though Nestorian Christianity was wide-spread, it has died out completely as a separate religion—and the chances are that the Nestorian brand was more nearly the real thing, to the Orient at least,

than this species of it which comes now from the West, particularly from North America. To-day there is not a Nestorian in China, unless I am misinformed; I did meet one in my wanderings, but he was gathering funds for his church at home beyond the Caspian! But how much now untraceable influence did Nestorian Christianity leave behind in China? One not infrequently runs across things the existence of which in that land can hardly be explained in any other way. As they absorbed Buddhism and made it something Chinese, more unlike than like the original, so they will probably absorb Christianity and make it over into their almond-eyed likeness. Why not? Is it not after all an Eastern religion brought back in strange form to the East by the West, the busy, hurrying, aggressive West, in contrast to the slow, contemplative, passive East? There may in time be a real Chinese Christian church, but it is not likely that an American or European Christian of to-day, coming upon it three centuries hence, would easily recognize it as such.

## CHAPTER XXV

### HOMeward DOWN THE UPPER YANG TZE

I AM glad that Omeishan happened to be the last of the sacred mountains to which I made pilgrimage, for any other would have been very much of an anticlimax. With a last long look at the snow-clad range of Tibet, clear for a few moments as if in farewell as we prepared to descend, I set out from what was really the end of my Chinese travels; for though it would be through mainly unseen territory, all that was really left now was to go home.

What descending 9500 feet of stone steps between breakfast and lunch time, from bitter cold with a bit of snow and hail to tropical heat again, would do to the average auto-riding legs I do not know; but I can suspect from the remembrance of the descent from Omeishan left in my own well-hardened calves and thighs a week afterward. By early afternoon, craning our necks now and then to look back at the place two miles almost sheer above us, we were striding on across the flat plain again, to sleep within the red sandstone walls of Omeishien, in a dirty little chapel where most of the "guest room" was taken up with bags of potatoes awaiting transport to the missionaries. Next morning we stepped off the fifty *li* as fast as the two coolies to which we had reduced our load could trot on the level to Tzu Chi, where we got passage on one of the many native boats carrying cargo and stray travelers down a small river, in which we stuck now and then on the stony bottom, and which long bamboo rafts descended with much cargo. The rice and other products of far interior Szechuan often make their journey down to the beginning of steamer traffic on these huge rafts, with upturned bows like toboggans, and raised hardly an inch above the swiftly flowing waters they navigate, so that rapids often souse both cargo and men. Presently we came out into the rushing river that comes down from Yachow, which tore us through some mighty whirlpools that have swallowed many a boat and wrecked many a raft, but which brought us to Kiating still early in the afternoon.

It is a fine idea this coming overland to the first trickle of a river system and dropping down it, though I did not have as good luck as

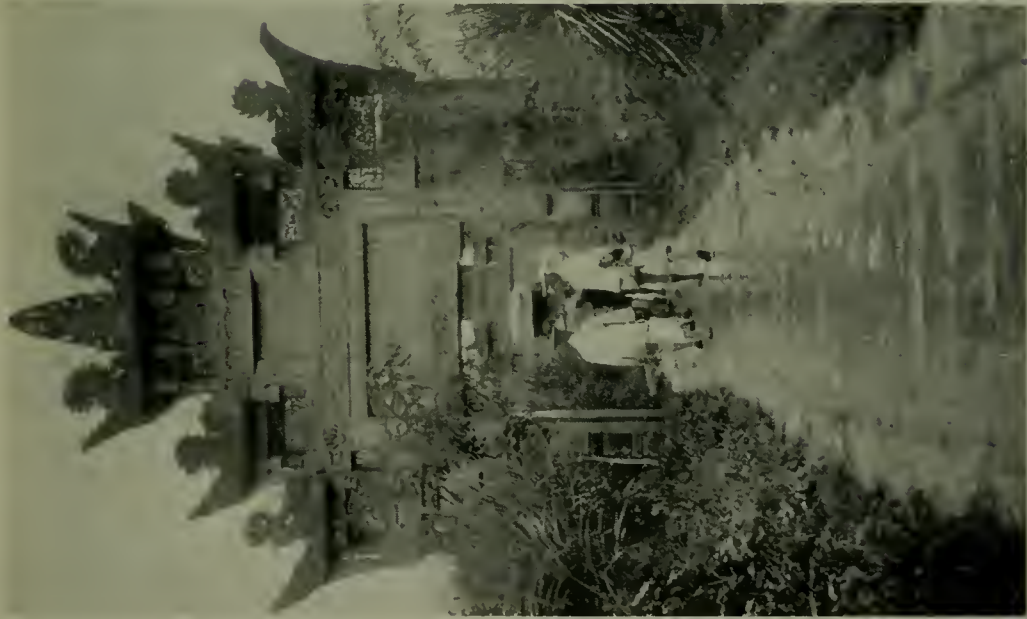
I had hoped. For the steamers that fight their way for days up this branch from Suifu during the short high-water season would have carried me down-stream in half a day, had they not already stopped running. I joined an American missionary family who had rented a prairie-schooner-roofed boat for themselves and four children and servants, with just room for full housekeeping on water. Our six galley-slaves, standing and facing forward, rowed with their narrow-bladed oars, but did not strain themselves, mainly drifting with the swift current. Though the sun was brilliant, a breeze made the temperature, very different down here in the Yang Tze valley than at the summit of the sacred mountain behind, quite endurable. The river rushed us down between daylight and dark over what would have been four hard days' travel overland, or many more if we were being dragged back up-stream in the same boat, so that by dark we were tied up at the boat-crowded wharf under the walls of Suifu, some 125 miles below. A single family usually owns each Yang Tze boat, and where there are great rapids men are hired for that place only, a sad, hand-to-mouth-looking lot. Trackers were everywhere, bent double along the shores, now on a flat beach, now clambering like chamois over veritable Alpine obstacles. Frequently we heard some of them singing in chorus, sounding at a distance something like mountain yodeling, now and again closely approaching a sailor's chantey, and the songs of the Yang Tze boatmen were to sound in my ears almost all the way from Tzu Chi to below the gorges. The boatmen of the Yang Tze, and also the trackers evidently, unless they are in the throes of passing some great rapid, break their fast at ten and eat again more leisurely after their long day's work is done. To see them squatted over their rice-bowls at either time is to recall the old adage as to what constitutes the best sauce. The steersman is of higher caste than the mere rowers and almost always eats alone, generally at the back of the boat, perhaps with the *lao-ban* himself.

There were three steamers in Suifu on the night of my arrival, and surely not all three of them would go down again at once. Nor did they, for though two were gone at dawn, the one with the American captain was still moored down near the point of the two rivers, and what I took to be authentic English-speaking word came to me at breakfast that she would leave "after dinner." That is not a particularly clear expression in a land where British and American speech are intermingled, but to be on the safe side I decided to get aboard by noon. This gave me time to find for Yang Chi-ting, who would

have been of more expense than use to me from there on, a position of splendid opportunities with the British prototype of our great oil trust, and to bid a leisurely farewell to my several fellow-countrymen of both sexes in Suifu. About eleven I set out across town behind three carriers jogging under my reunited belongings, still chaperoned by the ever-faithful Yang, through streets like spring ice under a Scotch drizzle. When we had wended our way through the labyrinth that breaks out at last on the steep and narrow waterfront, and it was still well before whatever takes the place of the stroke of twelve in interior China, rumors began to reach us, finally crystallizing into certainty, that the steamer had left fifteen minutes before. Probably I had overlooked one of the three languages widely used in China, and the expression "after dinner" had probably been the Chinese "after eat rice," which, passed by a Celestial on board to one on shore and translated into American before it reached me, had been my undoing.

September was already well begun and there were excellent reasons why I should not be much longer delayed in Suifu; but mere cuss-words are at best a relief to the spirits when there is nothing tangible, such as a Chinese coolie or boatman, to be moved by them, so I parked in the nearest warehouse the loads it had cost me three thousand "cash" to bring across the city, in the not unreasonable hope that at least one of the score of steamers which ply between Chungking and Suifu in this season would turn up that night, or at worst in the morning. To make a long story short, however, though that was Friday afternoon, the sun set sadly again the following Tuesday evening with still nothing but vain rumors of steamers to arrive. One might have supposed that the whole twenty of them had fallen afoul of one another somewhere down the river and were engaged in some deadly international struggle under their half-dozen flags. True, I had a most charming host in the person of an American summer-widower, torn between his vocation of saving souls and his avocation of scientific explorer, "baching" it in his big two-story house in a great grassy yard just inside the city walls, with ample accommodations for the developing of my accumulated films—during the course of which an eight-foot snake marched straight across my scene of operations in the back courtyard, evidently as little bent on making my close acquaintance as I his, thereby about doubling my experience with his kind in all the many dreadfully reptile-infected lands in which I have traveled. One could always spend a pleasant hour or two climbing the grave-infected hills among





Szechuan is noted for the number and magnificence, even the artistic merit, of the memorial arches of stone straddling its principal highways



Pilgrims to China's many sacred places hard of access are mainly of the simple masses and usually wear special costumes and carry strange trinkets



A Chinese tea-house, even when it is only a makeshift structure of reed mats, is a busy and important place, clearing-house for all the news that is to be had in the region



In silk-shops and other emporiums of valuable goods there are always more salesmen than customers, and as far as possible these are all recruited among the owner's family or clan

the old monasteries back of Suifu, and look down over the city and longingly down the broad Yang Tze. But my chief desire just then was to be on my way homeward, and when Tuesday also died I gave it up. Two native boats with missionaries bringing their household goods and chattels back from their summer in the mountains had come in and were to go on to Lüchow at dawn, and any move was better than indefinite sitting and gazing down the river like Ulysses on his rock. So late that night my belongings might again have been seen, had the beholder owned a lantern, jogging their way out of the one gate that was open and all around the mountain trail between the city wall and the branch river to the front of another crude native boat, where I spread my cot and snatched a few hours' sleep before we were off in the hurrying current of the real Yang Tze.

Early afternoon brought me to Lüchow, another city built on the utmost point between two rivers, and to the realization that I had done much the same as walking to Albany when trying to get from New York to Chicago. True, we had met an up-bound steamer on the way down, but would it stop at Lüchow when it returned, or steam disdainfully past? There being no Palace Hotel in Lüchow, and my conscience not being sufficiently macadamized to let me trespass again on missionary hospitality, there was nothing for it but to camp on one of the native boats at the foot of the garbage-heap banks and pass whatever time fate had allotted me there in strolling at random within the city's rambling old stone and earth wall.

My only vivid impression of the chief city between Suifu and Chungking, except perhaps the speed with which the streets cleaned and widened under Yang Sen had returned to natural Chinese filthiness and narrowness again so soon after his departure, was the corpse of a coolie that lay in the center of the filthy narrow street up which endless lines of half-naked men trotted with their two buckets of chocolate-colored river-water, which they dipped up at the foot of the garbage-heaps. He, too, evidently, had been a water-carrier, and had finished his allotted toil just at the top of the irregular slimy steps leading up from the river. He lay where he had fallen when we arrived on Wednesday afternoon, and he was still there when I left late next morning. Had he been a dead cat or rat no less attention could have been given him. Swarms of his fellows going to and fro with empty or filled buckets passed over him, now and again inadvertently slopping him with the dirty river-water; directly above him

on an earth bank that had been cut down to make this passage to the delectable water-supply of Lüchow was a tea-house in which scores of men were noisily eating and drinking, a client now and then gazing vacantly down upon the corpse. Just inside huts almost within arm's reach of him Chinese families passed the afternoon as usual and slept through the night undisturbed. In the morning, when the almost tropical sun began to beat down upon him again, young bloods, either out of mere swank or because one's impression that the Chinese are evidently born without a sense of smell, or that centuries of their present style of living have atrophied it, is false, ostentatiously held their noses as they passed, picking their steps through the slime in which they would spend a lifetime without personal endeavor at amelioration. Flies swarmed ever thicker about him, children came to gaze and grin at him, but as long as I remained in Lüchow no one made any move toward removing him from the center of the busy public street.

The little steamer flying the Chinese flag that came rushing downstream in the middle of the morning was of course, such being my dastardly run of luck, the worst one of the whole twenty plying the upper river. First of all it gave me a great scare as it dashed past the city as if it had not even seen it. But that was due only to the seamanship of Chinese pilots, it seemed, for far down where the two rivers join it swung swiftly about and slowly made its way back to where we were waiting, a chaos of boats filled with freight, baggage, and Chinese passengers dashing off to it. The "cabins" were all full of well-to-do, opium-smoking Chinese merchants. Had we waited in Suifu we *perhaps* would have had first choice of accommodations. One of the missionaries and his wife and two small children with whom I had come down had to give it up and get off again after they had crowded all their baggage on board, for the rumor began to circulate that the boat would not reach Chungking that evening, and it was evident on the face of it that the woman and children could not pass a night under such helter-skelter circumstances. But I determined to stay and be delayed no more. True, I could not move both legs and arms at once, and to get a lunch out of what remained of my tinned things was like jimmying a safe; but at last, after the interminable and utterly inexplicable delay which attends the departure of all public conveyances in Chinese hands, we began to move, and from then on, except for lack of elbow-room and a mixture of smells of unsavory antecedents, I lived. That day we met seven steamers on their way up river, some of them floating palaces compared to this one. In place of a whistle our own steamer

had a Ford automobile-horn, and whenever this blew as I dozed in the Chengtu chair I had crowded aboard, I caught myself just in time to realize that jumping over the side was not equivalent to dashing to the edge of a roadway. We made no stops at the various towns along the ever wider banks, and even went on under a magnificent full moon; but my emaciated hopes died entirely as we tied up to a muddy bank for the night. My good-natured fellow-passengers compressed themselves a little more to let me set up my cot and stretch out in a popular corner of the deck, where all the boat people and most of the passengers found reason to step back and forth over my head some score of times each, and where with the electric lights blazing all night, the constant hubbub from at least one pair of passengers, and the stench of opium incessantly in my nostrils, I managed to survive until a blast from the Ford horn implied that dawn was breaking sufficiently to risk it again.

My fellow-sardines had hardly washed their faces and hands with their towels dipped in boiling water and brushed their teeth in cups of cold taken from the river before Chungking grew up about us through the dense mists of early morning, and I soon found myself climbing an interminable stair through slime and filth and dead cats and dogs to the great gate, where the baggage of all but foreigners was set down and opened in the mud. A great fire had just destroyed one of the most conspicuous of the foreign establishments and many of its more modest native neighbors on the hilly bank of the river, and the smoke seemed still to be mingling with the fog and mist that made the visibility so low that even the broken ruins against the skyline could hardly be seen during the morning. But by noon this had cleared away and left me a brilliant, not to say a sweating day.

The chief port of the upper Yang Tze and in many ways the capital of China's greatest province, on the usual nose of land between the main river and an important branch, is heaped up helter-skelter on an immense rock, a situation that makes it one of the most striking towns in China. Some spokesman for Chungking has denied the wide-spread rumor that it is the filthiest city in China, and to this extent I agree with him. There are far too many candidates, for the high honor to be lightly awarded to any one; all such claims are probably due to the same unfortunate cause as so many other of man's ills, misunderstandings, and encyclopedic misinformation,—the ignorance caused by too narrow experience. Like the claims of having the largest dog-pound or the finest engraved police-stars, they are often made by people

without any form of comparison, who naturally cannot, as in this instance, imagine anything more filthy than the place for which they enter the candidacy. When the Chungking spokesman leans over backward in his laudable attempt to dim the fame of his native city, however, and says that on the contrary it is the healthiest and one of the cleanest in China, "because it is so built on its sloping rock that every rain washes it thoroughly," I am regretfully forced to withdraw my support. Surely the rains were never anywhere delayed for such an unconscionable time as the acceptance of this hypothesis in the face of the visible evidence would require. One ignorant of China might conclude that the Chinese had originally built Chungking on this great rounded rock in order that the rains might wash it; and any one who knows a-b-c about the Chinese is well aware that any such foresight is utterly contrary to their temperament and history.

The endless chain of pitiful coolies who climb all day in little more than a loin-cloth under their two immense buckets of yellow water through all the city gates opening on the two rivers that almost surround Chungking leave many of the other alleys stretches of slippery slime. Many of the streets inside are laid in steps also, like the long ones up from the rivers, and while these often lead to picturesque corners, they lead also to nooks and crannies that have not in decades been cleaned by the rains or any other conscious or unconscious agency. The stranger who scorns to take a chair may climb countless stone steps up one of these passageways, only to find that they are the wrong ones and that they have led him into the sad hovels of some blind back alley, where every filthy little den has its squalling infant and its yellow cur. The welter of life is as striking in the overcrowded up-and-down streets of Chungking, through many of which one can hardly fight one's way, as anywhere in China. Rats run about the city at night so freely that morning light always discloses tragedies among them, starved to death, perhaps, in the fierce competition for nourishment with the human population, the pigs, the yellow curs, and a host of other competitors. Boys had tied a live one to a telegraph-pole in the heart of town and were torturing it in truly Chinese fashion when I passed, a goodly crowd, including several grinning policemen, standing close about them.

Chungking is visibly a busy and an important commercial city for all that, its demand for space so above the available supply that when the waters of the Yang Tze and its tributary descend in the autumn whole towns of houses and huts are built down on the foreshore,

equipped even with electric lights; and after the Chinese fashion they are never vacated or torn down again until the last possible moment, so that yearly many of them are washed away. Across both of its two rivers, other populous towns have grown up from its surplus of trade and opportunity, the overflow across the main river including the chief establishments of foreign business houses. The shouting and the cadenced song of coolies carrying great burdens, in pairs or in groups of a dozen and even a score of pairs, each with the end of a whole bamboo over his calloused shoulders, lugging from the landing-place to the farthest corner of now sun-drenched Chungking some massive piece of boxed machinery made in our native land, each striking the stone pavement at every step with his great iron-pointed stake, not merely added to the natural din of any Chinese city but showed its commercial importance and gave some suggestion of the Chungking mixture of ancient and modern methods, of pure muscle-power and machinery. The city seems to have been overcrowded for some time past, for hill after hill of green grave-mounds stretches over range after range across the river, and those who formerly struggled for space and livelihood in Chungking as their descendants do to-day are buried successively in the hollows between the mounds, so that the dead pile up layer after layer.

Most of the goodly number of foreigners required to run the commerce of Szechuan's great treaty-port live in Hoboken and Jersey City, so to speak, scattered across the main river, and late almost any morning one may see snappy young Westerners, British or American for the most part, their faces proclaiming to the world that they might with good luck have been fairly successful shoe-clerks at home, come riding up the great slimy steps from the river seated in regal state in a four-man chair, the poles and bearers of which knock the common herd aside in a calm and dispassionate way that it would have done Louis XIV good to see. These are the young men whom one will find in their clubs more promptly after the morning's or the afternoon's work in the office than they were prompt in reaching it. Our own consul has his castle-like office and residence miles from the madding commercial rush, in a castle overlooking the Yang Tze in a far corner of the acrobatic city wall that is busy as an old maid school-marm trying to surround her children on a country excursion. To go up there with a document and hold up one's hand and say "I do" or "I am"—for it is impossible to swear, in the legal sense, over the telephone—one must take half a day off and a chair, for the steps are many and weary-

ing. Yet our delicate representatives cannot stand the hot months there, though Chungking is no hotter in summer than New York, but must go up into the hills across the Yang Tze, getting down to the office at eleven and hurrying away before three all the long summer.

It is to be expected that there should be a little anti-foreign feeling in Chungking; there always seems to be where foreigners, at least other than missionaries, are gathered together. White ladies find it best to remain in their chairs while passing through the streets, not merely to avoid the incessant slime of the water-carriers, but because, unlike anything I ran across in the rest of China, many of the children are given to calling out "Foreign sow!" and similar choice greetings, and even to throwing mud and the like, if it looks safe to do so. Chungking was besieged by rival forces no fewer than five times during the last half of the year just then past. Foreigners living in bungalows across the river awoke in the dead of night to hear soldiers tramping across their porches on their way to or from battle; foreign residences were in a way always under fire, and though golf and tennis did not exactly have to give up, there were weeks at a time when players tossed up to see who would take the end of the tennis-court where the bullets fell thickest, and gallant young men playing with ladies retained that end quite as a matter of course. One might suspect that fine Chinese marksmen were even purposely firing upon the outside barbarians, when it is disclosed that in the course of the five sieges one foreigner was shot through the neck—though he quickly recovered—and another had a chair-coolie shot under him. Nothing could be done about all this, except to have the harmless consuls write polite notes to the Chinese officials, some of which were filed away in the archives of Peking for future historians. During the fighting soldiers often helped themselves to coppers at the mint over in the city and then retreated across the Yang Tze, so that at one time coppers fell in price on the bungalow side of the river to 5000 to a "Mex" dollar, whereas in the city they were only 2800. The siege and the other troubles had caused many of the well-to-do Chinese of Chungking to move to Shanghai or elsewhere under foreign protection. During the fighting the various faction leaders often rushed to foreign houses for protection, after the time-dishonored way of treaty-ports. One scholarly old Catholic priest, simple in the ways of the world, took in a general who implored his aid, and for weeks the general kept half a dozen concubines in the Catholic compound, smoked opium, had gay parties, and led the life of a successful Chinese military-politician.



Now things had completely quieted down, at least on the surface, as they always have a way of doing when I approach any scene of contention, but hope remained green, for four separate and completely independent generals were in command of "Szechuan's real capital," each selfishly watching his own interest and waiting for a chance to increase his taxable area. Meanwhile the city was divided up between them for purposes of supporting their countless soldiers, who filled every temple or large house, and of being taxed to the limit of endurance.

As the only cabin passenger, and indeed the only foreigner except the officers, of the sumptuous British steamer *Wanliu* in which I sped at last down the Yang Tze Gorges that I had never ascended, I had the entire upper half of the ship, its whole two upper decks, entirely to myself and my arm-chair. Never more suddenly had I been brought back into the full comforts and complications of Western civilization, as great a contrast to life on the overland trail, or even to that on overcrowded little Chinese steamers, as one could imagine. Tourists, having no great taste for stray bullets, were conspicuous for their absence on the upper Yang Tze that year. This might have spoken badly for the trip down through the gorges, did one not learn by experience that tourists, like any other barometer, move sluggishly, ceasing to come after the reasons for their not coming are mainly over and continuing to come after the cause for their coming is virtually past.

We were off at dawn while the mists were still rising from the river, down past the picturesque piled-up waterfront of the city spread like a turtle-shell on its rock, down past the Harbor Master of Chung-king, as foreigners derisively call the immense stone Buddha enthroned in his shrine on the bank near the junction of the two rivers, a doll compared to the cliff-carved one at Kiating, yet very important to the devout and superstitious river- and junk-men, who come here with votive offerings and prayers for a safe return from the dangerous voyage down the gorges; for they take their lives in their hands indeed whenever they start in their frail craft down this vast river-carved gash through the mountains.

I do not wish to be misunderstood as saying that I found the far-famed gorges of the Yang Tze disappointing. But far-reaching fame always dims the real glory of great things by causing the mind that has heard so much to expect more than is reasonable, though the same mind, coming upon some lesser but unheralded sight, may be highly

elated. Besides, I had already been far and wide in China, and if I had not seen other gorges as striking, at least I had been through many under more exciting circumstances. In beauty and grandeur the famous gorges are captivating, however, with their solitudes of bare rock, frequently softened with masses of ferns, and sometimes decked in rich foliage.

Really the gorges extend only from Kweichow to Ichang, in Szechuan and Hupeh, respectively, a run down the river of five or six hours on the second of the two days; but the banks all the way from Chungking have much of beauty to offer. Nor are the gorges continuous from Kweichow to Ichang; houses are piled up the steep slopes all along them, families living in queer stone huts like eagles' nests among almost impregnable cliffs. Here and there in the very heart of the gorges towns of considerable size, some of them even walled, find footing at the base of the mountains, which spring all but sheer from the river's edge, the towns themselves often laid out so steeply that they look like pyramids. Wherever possible, the forty-five-degree-and-more hillsides have been planted on artificial as well as natural terraces, and every tillable inch of the great gash through the mountains is cultivated. Here upright fields of grain stretch to the sky in little columns between absolutely sheer rock cliffs a thousand, two thousand feet high, on which even nature cannot plant and bring forth. Slopes of rock half a mile long and more nearly perpendicular than horizontal have tiny patches of cultivation in the hollows or near the bottom; the moment the summer waters recede enough to uncover more earth, peasants rush in and plant. The Chinese certainly know to the last degree the secrets of exploiting agricultural resources. If there is a general air of dilapidation and decay in these gorge villages, compared with which the open country-side is all neatness, it is not merely because there is less fertile land, but that civil war has long been almost continuous along the upper Yang Tze, and regard for life and property negligible. It was a great surprise to me to find that there is a rock-cut trail clear through the gorges, and I had never realized that I might have walked even there—and had better views. The road cut in under the sheer cliffs looked from the top of the steamer but three feet high, yet a man rode along it on horseback, and huts are tucked away back of it here and there. One great gorge has zigzag holes fourteen inches square—they looked two from the steamer—up the last sheer cliff, and one of the countless legends of the gorges has it that a general of many centuries ago cut them and took an army up; just why it not apparent,

since, if he was facing the hard job of crossing the Yang Tze at the gorges, there are better places to mount close on either side of this sheer wall. Coffins are tucked away in these immense cliffs, looking tiny also, the ends in some cases open. Other legends have it that there are wizards who govern and divert the great river for their own ends, those who cut the way for it through seventy miles of rocky mountains, and that one of these wizards by a blast of his nostrils carved for the river's passage that geological surprise known as the Wind Box Gorge. Of the dragons, serpents, and great fish that live in palaces under the huge rocks rising everywhere from the river's bed, in its deep pools or caves of curious construction along its rock-hewn sides, there is no end. It is they whose destructive emergence in obedience to the wizards, to serve destiny or wreak some private revenge, will cause a hundred-foot rise overnight to overwhelm the junk-men and ruin the country-side, bringing whirlpools and waterspouts that rush down or dash the junks to pieces and continually damage and occasionally destroy the steamers. But one might have fancied that neither the beauties of nature nor the fear of evil-intentioned wizards interests the rank and file of the Chinese; for down on the "first-class Chinese" deck Celestials, packed together as only Celestials will, slept all through the gorges like dead fish, their mouths open amid the flies, half-naked on their small hard wooden bunks.

The boatmen who ply the long oars on the junks along the way were often stark naked, prepared to fight the waters. They keep constantly on the alert against a swift and dangerous current amid narrow rock mountain walls, and are able to navigate the rapids and channels with extraordinary dexterity. There is not much tracking through the gorges; the boatmen wait for the wind, which is generally upstream, and they pull themselves along the cliffs by hooks on their poles. When they do track along the precipitous path up and down along the cliffs, these echo with the boatmen's songs. The junks are sometimes large enough to carry fifty tons of freight and a crew of a hundred. Farther down, especially in the broad placid stretches below the gorges, the sailing-junks of the Yang Tze are of all kinds and like the sands of the sea in number, to say nothing of their decorations. The sails of Chinese junks are always stayed with many bamboo poles across them, and the craft are commonly loaded to their full capacity if cargo is available, so that every passing junk, though one pass a hundred daily for weeks, is a temptation to the photographer. The Chinese craft making their way through the gorges are stoutly

built and at least comparatively new, gleaming in their yellow paint or varnish, in contrast to many old wrecks still plying less dangerous routes. When they get too old for this strenuous existence they go somewhere else or furnish homes to the beggars and petty thieves who inhabit discarded and rotten junks under the walls of Chungking and Ichang and the towns between. The sailors on the foreign steamers have it much better than the junk-men; they get \$18 "Mex" a month, but make even more by smuggling coppers, kerosene, and other hidden freight. The companies have to wink at this more or less, even some captains, at least the highest Chinese officers, engaging in it.

My trip on the *Wanliu* was one of the few cases in China when I traveled too fast, and I was glad she had to run at half-speed downstream through the gorges because of the junks. Perhaps there is reason for what seemed exorbitant fares for the two short days going down; since the engines must be so powerful compared with the freight space available that it does not pay them to ply below Ichang, where the gorges end; and during the four months or so a year when the water is too low for them to follow their chosen route they are simply laid up, officers, crew, and all, because they are so expensive to run that they would lose money elsewhere. Thus for eight months the foreigners—Americans, British, Scotch, French, Italian, Japanese, and nondescript—sailing the Yang Tze Kiang are constantly on the go; they cannot even take members of their own families on their own boats, though they may send them by others. So they see one another twice a week as they rush past—the down men doing most of the rushing—exchanging an indistinct megaphone greeting or a wave of the hand. But for four months of the year they live on Easy Street and can gather and drink in their clubs to their hearts' content; though even among the foreigners along the Yang Tze, it is said, hard drinking is on the decrease. Man is nowhere what he used to be.

The *Wanliu* drew eight feet and at times rolled like a ship at sea. One of her officers pointed out to me a scar now high above the surface of the water where the ship had struck a month before what was now the top of a corn-field, leaving a big yellow mark where the bow had knocked off a piece of the cliff. Of the innumerable stories one could gather of Yang Tze catastrophes many concern steamers, since the venturesome Britisher, Captain Plant, to whom a monument has just been erected at the entrance to the gorges, conceived the daring idea of navigating them by steam. Up or down the big foreign steamers make their way cautiously, yet not without frequent mishaps. Often

they knock a hole in the bottom and must lose valuable time for repairs at the paying season, sometimes having to go clear down to Hankow and even to Shanghai for them. One of the best American steamers had gone down in the gorges not long before, and we passed two on the rocks with holes in them. It is not uncommon to see dead Chinese floating down the river, some of them perhaps the victims of civil war and brigands, but some also no doubt of rapids and whirlpools. Now and then a sampan patrol is sent out to pick up corpses, putting a rope about their necks in order to tow a string of them to port for burial.

Though the English and Americans first dared to take steamers through the gorges, no white man on the river even to-day can do so without his Chinese pilot. Yet the steamers must be commanded by Europeans or Americans, or at least by Japanese, for in a crisis or matters of final authority the Chinese are insufficient. Generally there is the greatest friendliness and respect on both sides, though undoubtedly some foreign captains, even Chinese pilots, are inconsiderate of Chinese rights, lives, and property, and junks are sunk every season. It is inevitable that the steamer shall largely supersede the junk, at least for valuable or perishable cargo, as it already has with the best passenger trade, but the process of supersession is driving the junkmen out of their trade and livelihood—and a living is not easily earned by the Chinese masses. The wash from the steamers occasionally sinks junks, with an almost certain loss of life; but it is dangerous for a steamer to slacken speed in these very treacherous waters, even to save lives. There are frequent signal-stations through the gorges, two red balls for a junk, a red and white cone for a steamer, pointing up or down according to the direction in which they are traveling. These are maintained not by the Chinese, but by the maritime customs under foreign direction; but the signal system is not yet perfect.

Wanhsien, largest city between Chungking and Ichang, where we anchored, while the first day was still by no means gone, until the following dawn, has long been the center of a feud between the junk-men and the steamers. Only a few weeks before, the feud had cost a foreign and some Chinese lives there. An American working for a British company dealing in the valuable varnish-used wood-oils of Szechuan Province was making his shipments by steamer, though the junk-men insisted that they should be given the cargo. When the feeling was at its height the American, against better advice, went

ashore to oversee his shipments. A mob of coolies and junk-men surrounded him. Except in their very worst moods the average Chinese mob can be overcome by any Westerner of experience, nerve, and particularly the gift of humor. This American seems to have had at least the first two, but to have been a bit foolhardy and rather disdainful of Chinese courage, possibly also a little disdainful of the Chinese themselves. He lost his temper, charged the mob with his cane, and the mob, as one would expect, ran up the hillside. He followed it a little way, which was foolish and unnecessary, and then still more foolishly turned his back and sauntered down the hill again, scorning even to look behind him. A coolie, bolder or accidentally in front of the rest, struck him over the head with his carrying-pole; and seeing him in their power the mob fell upon him, as Chinese mobs do. He was carried to the British gunboat in the harbor and died soon afterward. There being no American gunboat at Wanhsien just then, the commander of the British boat threatened to shell the town unless two heads of the instigating *hong* were shot, and unless the generals in command of Wanhsien walked behind the coffin to the cemetery. Chinese of any rank ride in chairs to a funeral, so this meant much loss of face, but the generals dared not refuse. That the man or men who did the actual killing were apparently not apprehended or punished is disturbing in Western eyes, but Chinese justice is satisfied with meting out punishment to any member or members of a group that commits a crime. There was much difference of opinion on this action among the foreigners in China, but one could feel the effects of so drastic a handling of the situation all the way from Chungking to Hankow; there may have been even less love for foreigners, but there was a visible increase in wholesome respect, and what is the best policy in the Occident is not necessarily so in China.

The foreigners engaged in commerce on the upper Yang Tze have had much to contend with of late years. There has been much illegal taxation on foreign steamers along the Son of the Sea—illegal because treaties with the powers make the Yang Tze freely open to them; and, contend the foreign business men, if this is to be changed it must be by treaty and not by violence. Local military dictators, sometimes little more than bandit chiefs, have fired upon foreign steamers, and foreign officers have been killed and wounded. The militarists have sent out aged craft, often with impressed coolies as boatmen, loaded with nothing more valuable than mud, and when these have purposely got themselves sunk by steamers the militarists have put in large claims

for damages on the assertion that silks, silver, and soldiers were aboard. Of late they had even begun to commandeer foreign steamers to carry their soldiers or their opium.

Wanhsien of turbulent history was a picturesque place, among the mountains just above the main gorges. One of our several little gunboats, puny craft taken from Spain during our war with that great power, and still bearing their Spanish names, was anchored at Wanhsien, as was one at several other ports, so that the American traveler was usually welcomed to an unintoxicating dinner among his own people in the officers' little mess-rooms. Our sailors on these pathetic war-ships of the Yang Tze Patrol often have a Chinese servant each to do their dirty work, so that life has its compensations even when tiny steel-walled quarters are seething beneath the summer heat for which the great valley is noted. I went ashore in Wanhsien with officers of our gunboat there, and we tramped over the large, dirty, compact, much-sloping town itself and the grassy foot-hill vicinity without noting any tendency to do us bodily harm, though there was no great friendliness. High on a cliff-sided hill above it there is a wealthy city which even foreigners cannot enter without credentials and prearrangement sponsored by the residents thereof. Across the languishing tributary back-water which divides the town into two unequal parts when the Yang Tze is high, and which is then the rendezvous of many ferrying boatmen, there is a rock-bottomed stream down which crystal-cold water pours from the mountains close behind, furnishing the city its chief laundry. One of the most striking old stone bridges in China, rising in a high magnificent arch and bearing a building on its shoulders, straddles this. So inviting are the many clear pools of the mountain stream in its solid rock bed, in which scores of holes as big as trunks have, for some purpose not clear at a glance, been cut, that not only is it the resort of most of the washerwomen, water-carriers, and beasts, but of those Chinese, men and boys only, who are tempted to break the usual Chinese rule and bathe in it.

Ichang at the foot of the gorges, which we reached easily at four the second afternoon, is perhaps the most uninteresting city in China, though it had the first rickshaws I had seen since leaving Indo-China. The entire first-class passenger list of the *Wanliu* went ashore for a stroll, but slept on board, since there was no steamer down the river until the next midnight. Luckily steamers run at night on this broad placid lower river, for it has no interest whatever after the wonders of far western China; and there was nothing to do but to go down

to Shanghai a thousand miles below and home, unless—— Shasi, where I awoke at the wharf-side next morning, was no more inspiring than Ichang, and two or three blue-gray transports, packed, tighter than we pack freight, with Chinese soldiers rushing down river to take part in the war then going on about Shanghai, were the only gleam of excitement. After that there was nothing but the dead-flat banks far apart, with the long-familiar life of China still going on in the towns on the shores and on the surface of the great placid stream itself—here a hobbling figure one knew to have bound feet, there a fisherman waist-deep in the edge of the stream throwing his black net, rows of mud huts crowding to the very river-bank, paddy-fields in which ships sometimes lose their way at high water.



## CHAPTER XXVI

### ACROSS COUNTRY TO CANTON

**F**ROM Hankow I might simply have dropped down the Yang Tze to Shanghai and sailed for home. But there remained one of the eighteen provinces to be seen before my Chinese travels would be complete, and perhaps there was time for a last cross-country jaunt from its capital to Canton. I like to end my long journeys with a little walking and roughing it, if only so that I shall not arrive home already weary of comforts and eager to start out again; besides, a week or two of hard tramping would be good preparation for three weeks of sitting on an ocean liner. It was not certain that I could get through in time to board the steamer, on which we were already booked, before she cast off from Hong Kong at dawn on October 10, but up to a certain point I could turn back and still catch her at Shanghai.

While all but my road-baggage went on down the river, I turned back up the flat-banked Yang Tze. The British steamer which was the only one that fitted my hurried schedule was crowded with missionaries, mainly women and children, returning from their summer on Kuling, so there was not a berth left; and under no circumstances, the tight-lipped young British agents insisted, could a European be taken except as a cabin-passenger with a cabin. The exception to that absolute rule was, I found by dint of some scurrying, that if one could find a friend who was also a friend of the manager of the line, one might by special personal pull get special personal treatment, with the result that I got very special personal permission to pay first-class fare for sleeping on my own cot on the open deck—and once on board found that several other men had been granted the same extraordinary favor. Thus it came about that, to quote one of my fellow-passengers in the same predicament, I went “stowboeing” down to Changsha.

As a last resort I might have taken the amusing little narrow-gauge railway from Wuchang, across the Yang Tze from Hankow, which works its way southward to Yochow and the Hunan capital, and even some little distance beyond, in an eastward swing to some coal-mines

in the western edge of Kiangsi Province. But its trains—if the word fits them—take thirty-six hours, even with good luck and no interference from soldiers or bandits, to cover the 225 miles between the two capitals, and there are many opportunities on the way to be separated from one's baggage, if nothing more. Part of the nebulous Peking-Canton Railway so long sadly needed, this sorry relative of the now well-seasoned Hankow-Peking section fails by about 300 miles to connect with the third portion, which strives nearly half that distance northward from Canton. It was this unrailed and perhaps unspoiled territory that I proposed to cover on foot.

Off picturesque Yochow, already in Hunan, close to which our steamer ran to drop some Chinese passengers hastily into a native row-boat, we turned off from the Yang Tze into Tung Ting Hu, the largest lake, or pond, in China—at high water. It is a kind of reservoir for the Yang Tze and the streams which come in from the west and the south, so that at times it covers a greater extent than Poyang Lake itself. In winter it becomes a field, or at least a swamp, and trees were here and there already showing above it. At dusk we anchored in this broad shallow sheet within sight of the little island of Quinsan, which long furnished tea for the emperors of China, the leaves for which, according to tradition, were picked only by maidens. Off early and hopeful again on a brilliant Sunday morning, we were soon mounting the small Siang River, and all went well until nearly noon, when we went aground with a jolt that upset most of the children on board. As fortune would have it, a private launch of the American oil corporation was just passing, the Chinese skipper of which consented to take the several more hurried of us aboard, with all my baggage, and we reached Changsha that afternoon almost on time, whereas the steamer did not arrive until two days later. Yet not two months before all this country had been so flooded that there were breaks a quarter of a mile long in the huge stone and concrete dikes with abutments which lined the river much of the way, through which a reddish soil already looked dry, though the waters had flooded out the rice beyond, houses had collapsed, boats went everywhere, and corpses hung in the trees. Now the struggle was for rather than against water, and the treadmill-sluiques run by human or buffalo power common to all rice-growing southern China were again pilfering the water of the lowering river by lifting it into the thirsty fields, sometimes in three jumps. Villages were scattered along the ever-narrowing banks; near Changsha there was a picturesque town running up to many little



In Wanh sien on the Yang Tze a striking old stone bridge, bearing a building on its shoulders, straddles a rock-bottomed mountain stream in which the city does much of its washing



A young lady of Changsha already skilled in the making of Chinese paper parasols



A wheelbarrow freight-train of Hunan Province, where a little kangaroo-like front wheel is useful in clearing obstacles, pauses for a breathing-spell along the great overland trail from the Yang Tze to Canton

hills, each with a line of steps, and each bearing a furnace for the making of *k'angs*, huge earthenware jars, of which numbers here and there stood out against the sky-line of the high bank. Many polished yellow boats sailed up and down the river, which at length brought us to the capital of Hunan Province, faced by a great stone embankment that reminded one of the Mississippi.

Changsha is a long and in places sandy city, even as its name signifies, stretching far up and down the Siang Kiang, for it must have water, but not reaching very far inland. It is a more up-to-date city in some ways than most provincial capitals of China, its wall almost completely demolished, though there were as yet few boulevards in place of it, and with large modern shops on its widened main street, with gold and silver wares, lustrous silks, vessels of the white brass for which Changsha is famed, as well as for its embroidered silk portraits, landscapes, and other pictures. But it still uses only coppers for ordinary commercial transactions; and the atrocious Canton-style rickshaws, on wooden buggy-wheels with solid rubber tires, bump the rider like Peking carts, though never, luckily, getting beyond a walk even on the recently widened but still flagstoned business streets.

Times have changed in Changsha even during the present century. Just twenty-five years before, the fellow-countryman with whom I crossed the river and climbed into the sacred hills of Yoloshan had first come up to Changsha from the south, after ten years of mission work in Canton Province, and was refused permission to enter the city gate. Down on the river-front a German had sat for weeks in a boat he had hired, until at last the German Legation in Peking forced the Manchus to grant him permission to enter the city, and even then he went in a closed chair to call on the governor and came hastily out again the same way. On his first visit to Changsha my American host wore a Chinese costume and a *feng-mao*, the heavy winter cap that pulls down over the face; he spoke Chinese fluently, so that when he landed from his small boat without a servant they probably thought from his accent that he was a Cantonese, since they could not have dreamed of a foreign devil venturing ashore entirely alone. Even his huge size did not seem to excite suspicion, though it did excite the coolies who had to bear the weight of it, when he took a chair like any Chinese at the city gate. He rode across the city from one gate to another, then back again by other streets, raising the curtain of the chair to get a view of a place which probably no Westerner had seen, at least since the days of Marco Polo, and escaped again without

incident or mishap. The objection seemed to be mainly to foreign devils getting inside the city walls, no doubt for fear of ruining the *feng-shui*, for though they tried without violence to keep him from crossing the river, and led him astray up Yoloshan, he persisted in the ascent and had tea and shelled peanuts and toasted squash-seeds at the same temple table at which we sat this time with a priest who laughed heartily at the story of those queer days. Now, only a quarter-century later, the wall itself is gone, and foreign women and children hardly attract a passing glance in the streets, for "Ya-lee Hwei," as the people call what foreigners know as "Yale in China," to say nothing of other missions with many converts, and a fair-sized business community with its own residence section on a long strip of sand that is an island except when low water joins it to the further shore, have made even little foreign devils familiar sights to every resident of the Hunan capital. So no doubt there have been great changes in China even in my own short span of life, if at times one seems still to be back in the days of Confucius.

It was just my luck to reach Changsha a few hours after the launch running up the river to Hengchow had left on its last trip, for lack of water, though six weeks before the whole country had been flooded and rain poured during most of the time I spent in the city. There were other means of transport, but none of them so sure as walking, nor likely to be any more swift or comfortable. Chairmen would probably have complicated matters, causing loss of time, and Hunan hardly uses horses. It was still not certain that I could make the overland trip and catch the steamer, but if it looked unlikely when I reached Hengchow I could still turn back there. Moreover, the question of expense was for once worth considering, since not only are coolies' wages higher in Hunan Province than in most parts of China, but one must agree to pay carriers the same wages per day for returning empty-handed to their starting-point as for carrying. Thus to get across Hunan my two loads, totaling about the amount that would be checked free in the United States on a single ticket, cost about the same amount per mile as a Pullman journey in my own land, while I walked.

After a short night and not a very merry one in making final arrangements, I set out at dawn on September 24 with my baggage and a new short-time servant, in three rickshaws that bumped us at the snail's pace for which Changsha's two-wheeled vehicles are noted, to a garage in the outskirts of the city. For strange as it may seem,

there is an autobus service over a new military raised-dirt road for the ninety *li* between the capital and Siangtan, famous in Chinese annals, up the river. My plans required a start earlier than the public bus, hence the squandering of six "Mex" dollars for a "private car." Would that I had the descriptive powers of a Hogarth or a Cervantes to give the reader the faintest notion of the aged corpse of a Ford which transported my petty expedition from Changsha to Siangtan. Of the wind-shield there remained a diagonal piece of cracked glass, less than a foot wide, by chance in front of the driver's face, the missing portion being replaced with rags and cast-off clothing. This was representative of the entire car, and what caused a wheel to turn, or the tires, wrapped like the sore feet of a weary vagabond, to hold a single one of them up while they did so, is another of those esoteric riddles of the universe. But the thing moved, of course, awaking with its uproar the echoes of distant foot-hills, and the only other episodes of the journey were that some soldiers out drilling showed me a discourtesy such as had never before befallen me in China, by throwing stones at what was left of the wind-shield, and that we stopped half-way at a kind of toll-gate hut until a man came out to get from the chauffeur the written evidence that I had paid the fare.

Hundreds of boats with their loosened sails drying from the heavy rains of the day before made the long waterfront of Siangtan, to which we crossed in a sampan, look like a colony of women washing their hair. The missionary who had been asked by mail to hire two coolies for me "did not think we would get there" at the time I had said we would; hence there was some delay before we were off on a typical south China trail, built of solid stone and wandering for no apparent reason through perfectly level paddy-fields, the villages of the peasants on the stony hillsides in the background, in order to save all the arable land for feeding hungry mouths. When one is in a hurry, these incessantly winding roads of southern China seem a part of a general conspiracy to keep travel as slow as possible. The second crop of rice had just been harvested, the last thumping was still heard here and there in the fields, and the pilgrim season was on. Two days inland from Siangtan is Nan-Yoh, yet another of the great sacred mountains of China, and the meandering stone trail was an almost constant procession of pilgrims with newsboys' sacks over their stomachs bearing large black or red characters, some of the bags themselves in colors, especially bright yellow, many going, some already returning, singing as they tramped.

There were wheelbarrow freight-trains also to hold us up, each vehicle having a tiny wheel in front, evidently used to help the barrow up steps on the road, but giving it a suggestion of relationship to the kangaroo. White pigs, which any northern Chinese will tell you do not exist, were frequently seen; towns were numerous, and shouts for clients rose from tea- and rice-shops whenever pilgrims went by. Every inn had a shrine facing the street opening, and before this sat a pot full of incense-sticks, burned to various lengths. On the earth floor of room or porch were round straw-woven kneeling-mats, on which men, in some cases well dressed and looking quite rational, knelt, after bowing low and putting up an incense-stick each before the shrine. They were not at all worried by the publicity or the worldly noises or smells about them. On the other side of the open inn-front a woman sat incessantly poking bunches of dry grass into the cooking-furnace with a pair of bamboo tongs, and all the hubbub of a Chinese inn went on as constantly. Each man knelt and threw his hands well behind him, remaining very abject for a considerable time with his knees and elbows on the mat and his head touching the ground. Others came and took an incense-stick from a burning bunch of them and laid it across a cup that seemed to hold tea, and some burned paper "cash." Finally, rising to his feet, each worshiper took the cup of tea and made passes with it in and about among the burning incense-sticks, evidently offering his ancestors a drink, after which he socially took a sip himself, and then sprayed some of it on his feet, as Chinese laundrymen spray the clothes they are ironing, though whether this was a part of the ceremony or merely a way of removing some of the stain of travel where water costs money, or at least "cash," was not certain. Most of them rubbed their feet with one hand while they casually finished drinking the tea, and evidently all this accommodation is included in the price of the inn on the trail to Nan-Yoh, at least during the pilgrim season.

One of my two carriers gave evidence of being an opium-smoker in spite of solemn assurances by the missionary who had hired him, and both of them dawdled more than I liked, so that I began to fear for my close schedule. In fact, they did not reach the town we had set for the first day; but on the second the road was somewhat better, with a few *li* of comfortable dirt path that again gave way to the punishing flagstones that never ceased to pound my feet to the end of the journey over in Kwangtung. There were immense fields of lotus, foot-hills now and then sprawling clear down over the trail, many



evergreen trees, scores of them the pillars of rice-straw stacks, such as I had already seen in Kiangsi Province. In fact, this main trail between the Yang Tze and Canton was lined with tree-borne straw-stacks. Men were plowing here and there, and others armed with an old fan were beating bugs off the beans into dung-baskets, perhaps sprinkled with poison.

A faint glimpse of the sacred mountain-top from the trail skirting its base was all that the necessity of overtaking a trans-Pacific steamer allowed me, even if I had not already done pilgrimages enough to last a lifetime, for it would have required at least one hard day to climb the steep stony road which went out the back door of the highest temple building at Nan-Yoh-kai (South Sacred Mountain Market). That small town was more tightly packed with an immense crowd than I had perhaps ever before seen in China. Stalls sold all manner of home-made trinkets, and everything that could appeal to the piety, the hunger, or the childish personal tastes of the pilgrims, all at prices that took into account the lowly financial status of most of them. Back of the town against the mountain-foot and contiguous with it I was astonished to come upon one of the greatest temples in China, at least outside Peking. Here pilgrims win some sort of merit or good luck by shining brass "cash" on the stone dragons of the "spirit stairway" on either side of the main entrance. Others bowed down before roaring furnaces of burning paper "money" in the main courtyard, their flagstone-imperious soles piously turned toward the rear.

A boy I caught in the packed market offered to show me the way to the summer home of the Hunan Bible Institute. The boy had turned back and the night was pitch-dark before I got there; certainly if they had not foreseen a free lodging, my two coolies would never have carried my things up there at the late hour they arrived. Information had reached me that some missionaries of my own nationality were "working with the pilgrims" at Nan-Yoh-kai, and no doubt in a sense they were, for though they were housed in a huge establishment far away in the quiet hills, as great an antithesis to the seething pilgrim city as could be imagined, one huge stone building after another piled up the mountain-side, they did send Chinese Christian converts down to hand the pilgrims tracts as they left the sacred mountain-foot. Japanese lanterns led up to a new two-story stone "hotel" with all the comforts of spring-beds and downy mattresses, though the establishment is used just three weeks a year! The mission pays the expenses

of hundreds of ex-coolies, or the sons thereof, now studying as Christians, and even hires coolies to carry their baggage for them, so that they can have a Bible conference and a summer rest from the dreadful life they lead in the dormitories at Changsha and elsewhere. No wonder the 100,000 pilgrims to the sacred mountain of the south consider Christianity a rich man's religion.

The American couple who still remained to give me splendid hospitality had bad news. The agents they had sent eastward to the large town on the river had come back reporting that soldiers in great numbers were passing along the Siang Kiang and commandeering all the boats and coolies. The year before the missionaries had only been able to get their flocks back down the river by notifying the contending armies that they would pass at such a time and kindly to stop fighting; then an American walked on either side of the river holding the stars and stripes high above his head—almost as false a use of the flag as on the river-steamers that are American only because some fellow has registered them as such for a fee. Fighting was now at its height about Shanghai and spreading to other parts of the country; no doubt this meant what I had feared, a general military movement along the overland route that would prevent me from getting over into Kwangtung, not so much because the soldiers would actively interfere with me as because the narrow trails would be so congested and coolies so scarce that I might not be able to complete the journey in the time available.

I pushed on again at dawn, determined to get at least to Hengchow, an important city of interior Hunan where the floods had done great damage during the summer, before being forced to turn back. My coolies were so slow that I had time to run back to Nan-Yoh-kai to see the temple-throng at its morning prayers and still overtake them as they were breakfasting leisurely at a town an hour or more out. From then on we plodded incessantly until three in the afternoon, and as there were fewer pilgrims on this side of the mountain we made better speed, though the scarcity of them caused me misgiving, since it might mean that men of their class had gone into hiding from the advancing military forces. Among the pilgrims that we did meet were six engaged in showing more piety than I had ever before seen in China. The first man was in black, those behind him in bright red costumes, and each carried a little bamboo stool. They were walking one close behind the other at a very rapid pace for Chinese pedestrians, and every sixth step, all the way from their homes to the top of the

sacred mountain, several days' distance, they prostrated themselves on the hard flagstones, using the stools as support in rising again to their feet.

At three we came once more to the Siang River, and were glad to rest our weary legs on a little boat that sailed with us for the last thirty *li* into Hengchow, arriving just after dark of a black night. Here American missionaries not only got me two coolies in a hurry, ready to start again at dawn, but the best carriers I ever had in China. As we had seen no soldiers for all the rumors, I decided to push on, and we trotted away through the interminably long city crowding close to the river and its branches and still filled with signs of the destructive floods of a few weeks back. Ruined houses were numerous even among the rolling red and green hills beyond, over which duck-herders slowly urged their charges. I had thought of taking a chair from Hengchow, lest my feet give out on the endless flagstones, but chairmen could not have been recruited overnight, and they would be more likely to lag than mere *t'iao-fu*.

For three and a half days we trotted from dawn until dark, through a country of no unusual interest, stopping only for a hasty lunch each noon and putting up in such mud-room inns as offered when night overtook us. As I carried no watch and we never saw the sun, we had to take the stopping-places as we found them, but the best we might have found would not have differed much from the worst, which had a rooster at my head and a working landlord at my feet all night.

Long files of carriers, with open baskets of rice which I could not lift off the ground, or each with two varnished basket-jars of exactly the shape of our milk-cans and apparently filled with wood-oil, constantly disputed the narrow trail with my two jogging burden-bearers. Most of the coolies had red marks on their chests from medicinal scratchings, and I saw a man grinning as he pricked the legs of one after another waiting in line at a wayside hut, with a large pin that made the victim jump and squeak at every jab. One had his scalp tied up in a knot at the top and fastened with a kind of safety-pin, no doubt as a treatment for headache. A suggestion of the healing art is valuable in such a land, and I won unusual friendliness from my hard-working coolies and the people along the way, because, one of my men having an eye-infection common in China, and I happening to have medicine left from my own experience with it nearly a year before, I dropped this in his eyes at every halt. By the time we reached Chenchow on the afternoon of the fourth day the man's eyes were to

all appearances well again, and both he and his companion were ready to eat out of my hand. The trouble was that they brought me all sorts of ailments at every stop, and thought I was merely stingy with the medicine because I did not give some of the same for any ailment, even if I did not know what the ailment was, or if it was plainly soon to result fatally.

Chenchow shows its character as a former station on the old rice-tribute route from Canton Province by being mainly one long business street in a narrow valley, though it has a wall. There were many pack-mules in town, but I had never seen any on the road; evidently they came up from the river on the Kwangtung side. The soldiers here sprang a new one by wearing pictures of their generals similar to our campaign-buttons, no doubt furnished by the general himself. My Hunan servant, to whom any other province was a foreign land, lost his nerve and refused to go on with me, though the agreement had been that he would not turn back until he had put me on the train for Canton. He wept large salt tears in my presence, saying the road was not safe, and indeed there were many rumors of bandits and robbers, if nothing worse. But I could not turn back now, and I let him go, arranging his reward accordingly. Fortunately there were American missionaries even in these backwoods or I might have had difficulty in recruiting two more coolies, and as it was that job took most of the night.

The usual way overland is to go a day beyond Chenchow due south through Ichang to Pingshek on a small tributary of the North River of Kwangtung, drop down that to Lok-chong, and there change to larger boats. But boats are sometimes hard to get at Pingshek, and rumor had it that there were pirates behind every rock along that upper branch. The dubious missionaries and their Chinese friends were of the opinion that I would have much more chance of getting through if I walked another three and a half days at the same forced pace, over the mountains to Lok-chong itself. There was danger on that route also, but perhaps not so much as on the other road, and I could always be surer of my own feet than of hiring a boat where pirates or soldiers might have sent them all into hiding. If worst came to worst and the coolies could not make the long stages necessitated by the change of plan, I was reconciled to taking the few valuable things out of my baggage and abandoning the rest.

A stone road ten feet wide leads southward from Chenchow, some of it built of large pebbles that made even more painful walking than



At times the processions of pilgrims bound for the autumn festivities on the sacred mountain of Nan Yoh were unbroken as far as the eye could see along the winding flagstone trails of southern China



While great wads of paper "money" roar up the chimneys at Nan Yoh temple pilgrims bow down before the spirits of their ancestors to whom the pocket-money is being sent



All day long, week after week, the coolies of Hunan jog in endless broken files along the overland trail with their varnished basket-jars of wood-oil, the average pair weighing 150 pounds



Among the hills of the boundary between Hunan and Kwangtung Provinces the graves, covered with what seems to be lime, gleam whitely as far off as the eye can catch them

flagstones. Pounded sore with an unbroken week of swift, hard going, my feet did not enjoy them. This wide road with flat polished stones of all shapes, long low steps on the ascents and descents, was very much like the old Spanish highway leading down from the plateau of Bogotá into the valley of the Magdalena. Chinese and South American minds—not to say feet—often run in the same channel. The coolies had come long before dawn and we were off at daybreak, but of all the creeping, crawling things that came out of the ark those Chenchow coolies took the brown derby—or was it merely that the splendid ones from Hengchow made them seem so slow by comparison?

Fifty *li* out of Chenchow we left the wide main road to go on due south, taking a narrow one to the left, which was also, to my disappointment, solidly stoned. We started up a bit of a *ling*, an ascent or range, on which the coolies, who were nothing like so good as those of Yünnan on steep trails, dragged like snails. But at least as we rose higher there were grassy shaded spots in which I could lie and wait for them, and a bit of reading-matter was left with which to keep my mind from painting gloomy pictures of missing my boat at Hong Kong. The threat of rain had materialized only in a few showers of no importance; then the sun had come out again, bringing with it some cheer, though the heat was terrific, at least when we were climbing, until clouds brought relief. The mountain trail led through a different scene from that by which we had slowly mounted to the foot-hills. Compact stone towns were tucked tightly away against the bases of the hills about every small valley, so as not to use a foot of tillable land for houses. The towns and people were more prosperous, more kindly, using plump China bulls for plowing and huge wooden tubs for threshing the rice that matures later in the season than down below. For a long way among these hills forming the Hunan-Kwangtung boundary, sharply pointed cone graves covered with what seemed to be lime gleamed whitely among the hills which, unlike northern China and many parts of the south, are well wooded. The rice-fields climbed the range in long narrow steps until the climbing became impossible even to them. There were two stiff climbs before the first day was done, and worse ones on the second; strangely enough, the higher we went the hotter it grew, until it was hotter than the proverbial hinges, and all day long the up and down road was as stony as ever. That second afternoon out of Chenchow we crossed the border into Kwangtung, amid more terrific heat and climbs, then came to a delightfully cool top of the last range of the day.

T'an-tzeng, the first town in Kwangtung Province, was filthier than those of Hunan and wide-spread with public gambling, the great curse of the south. But the moment we came to the Kwangtung border the women all took on big bare feet. Fortunately for me, mandarin continued as the speech of the masses. The money changed to the small silver twenty-cent pieces also, but these passed at par with the silver dollar here. My servant having yielded to his fears and left me, I quickly realized what Americans suffer when they must do without a hired girl. Boiling and cooling my own water, cooking and serving my own food, even if mainly from tin cans, getting hot water for my feet and nightly bath, using native inn fires, and doing all the little odds and ends that one gets used to thinking of as automatic in servant-plentiful China, would have grown irksome if there had been many days of it and I had not been buoyed up by the thought of soon being back in full civilization again.

It was a great surprise to find it so mountainous and wooded, and it was mainly so in Kwangtung; for most of the climbing and stiff descents came after passing the border. Yet somehow one felt strangely safe, with a landscape much like northern Michigan in midsummer. The third day was one of real mountains and mountaineers. All morning we went rather gently up a river valley, with splendid weather and scenery, and toward noon I took a dip while waiting for the coolies to catch up with me. Behind range after fantastic blue range, which we seemed mainly to have dodged, streaks of sunshine struck down from behind the clouds on bits of the vast panorama. Once or twice we climbed so high that I dared to drink unboiled water from roadside springs—a rare treat in China. At one summit the trail ran through a stone grotto gateway fifteen feet from door to door, all of stone, even to the arched roof, and all the lower part cut out of the living rock. But in China one can never stay up on these lovely cool heights, these quiet clean places, but must always go down again to a noisy, mud-pen village to hobnob with pigs and curs and cracked-voiced women. For even if one dared stay up himself in this land of bandits and kidnapping, his carriers would refuse, complaining that there were no *pukai* in which to wrap themselves at night, no food; there is nothing the Chinese dread like solitude and quiet.

Once we passed a train of water-buffalo wearing straw sandals, and I realized that there are even slower jobs than coaxing along a pair of Chenchow coolies. Evergreen forests gave great quantities of logs, of telegraph-pole size, a hole chopped laboriously in the end of each by



which it was dragged down to the river and tied into a raft. Even here the old Chinese tendency to destroy forest growths was showing its hand, and great patches of the steep mountain-sides had been denuded. The dull boom of small rafts dropping down the boiling rocky river broke every now and again the stillness, and in the narrow river valley the woodsmen obstructed the public trail in the casual Chinese manner with piles of logs over which one had to climb laboriously every few yards. After a long distance up river, ever opening out more and more, I began to meet trains of coolies again, with tons of coarse-grained salt in basket-jars, the same receptacles, it seemed, in which oil and rice are carried from the north over into Kwangtung, so that if one had not known what was in them it would have seemed as if the same product were being carried both ways; more foolish things than that happen in China. The country became frankly Kwangtung in character now, changing finally to beautiful but almost treeless hills and folds completely clothed in yellowish-green grass. The towns were more frequent, and in some of them dear Dr. Sun's soldiers halted every coolie-load and exacted a tax, and were inclined to give me their attention until I joked with them a bit, mentioning that *fan-gwei-lo*, the Cantonese form of "foreign devil," were not subject to *likin*, and that these were only my personal belongings anyway. They capitulated, after the way of the Chinese once he has a smile on his face, and I ordered my coolies on. The most striking hold-up station was at an old inn with a roof and doors over the trail, where a small boy watched for travelers and woke the ragged official who collected the tax, with groups of soldiers within call if some coolie proved recalcitrant.

Just beyond this dirty village I burst out upon a beautiful sight of a small plain bounded on every side by mountains, at least three thousand feet below, light green with rice, with darker green lumps of hills standing forth like islands. We descended to it in what felt underfoot like a stone-quarry pitched at an impossible angle, and well after dark reached a small town straddling the trail and so densely crowded with coolies carrying the products of the interior down to the river that I spent my last night on the road in China under a cow-shed roof. Next morning the procession started long before daylight, so that there was little choice than to wake up and follow across an ever lower plain wrinkled with foot-hills. Many of the coolies carried baskets of roosters, and a long procession of crowing cocks stretched on out of the dawn. The men seemed to carry salt up country, with new umbrellas as a side-line, and to bring down roosters, chickens, and

empty baskets. That morning I passed many a man on his way northward with only one of the wooden steelyards the Chinese use for weighing, his face implying that he was on commerce bent. I finally came to the chicken market some ten or twelve *li* short of Lok-chong, where such a congress of crowing as I have never heard before or since was in progress. Evidently the buyers for the Canton market came this far to make their purchases, hence the great prevalence of steelyards; but it was still too early for buyers, as it was for breakfast, for no inn had its fire well going yet, and it was only at a trail-side booth just out of Lok-chong that we finally broke our fast.

We came at length to Lok-chong, which, as its name implies, speaks the Cantonese dialect, though we were so near the Hunan border that here and there a man could speak some mandarin. There were some large boats with wood and other cargo going down "soon," but I was suspicious of that word from Chinese lips, and after some wandering up and down the stony shore below the picturesque South China buildings hanging out over the water, I found a smaller boat ready to take me down for a price that, though it was exorbitant as prices go in the interior of China, would seem cheap when translated into American money. When the bargain had been struck and the usual advance of half the price made, I found that it was not the good-sized *wupan* in and about which the bargaining had been carried on that I was to have, but the boat little more than a canoe—and there were many rapids ahead—which was produced from around behind the large one the moment I could not help myself; and at the same time the big sturdy mandarin-speaking men, with whom I had been making the arrangements with no other thought than that they were to take me down river, pocketed the advance, and there appeared in their places a man of sixty-five and a boy of twelve, each with an ear-ring in his left ear and speaking not a word of mandarin.

There was no help for it. I took again to the sign-language and was off in my little private craft, spending the rest of the morning in rearranging, and largely throwing away, my belongings, particularly my road-clothes. The hour during which the septuagenarian and the boy were cooking for me, tied up to a bank that I indicated, I put in having a splendid scrub in the river and astounding all within sight by swimming back and forth across it. It was as hard to realize that this old man who had spent his entire life on the water was unable to swim as it was to believe that not the simplest word of real Chinese

meant anything to him. Now and again we passed boats being tracked and poled up river. Women as well as men walked in perfectly horizontal positions along the cleated sides of the big clumsy craft, their shoulders against the crutch-stock of their bamboo poles, screaming as with a death-rattle while they exerted themselves to the last ounce of strength, like champion wrestlers, to push the boat an inch a minute.

The water of the river was clear, its current fairly swift, the old man and the boy steady rowers and even capable of silence at times, the ever lower mountains about us green and pleasant. I spent most of the afternoon making up for my ten days of forced march by lying on the cot that just fitted into the boat under the rounded roof and no more. Late in the evening I forced the pair to run the craft ashore and spent until daylight getting a real sleep without the continual jerking of their paddles and their incessant orders from one to the other, much preferring this to reaching our destination and having to hunt lodgings. There had been not a little of what seemed to be cannonading in the direction of Shuichow, otherwise called Saokwan, and I feared fighting would hold me up after all; for if the 139 miles of railway running northward from Canton City were interfered with by fighting or troop movements I could hardly walk it in time to catch my steamer, and the same causes might hold up the boats that run down the North River. But there was also much small firing in the towns along the way, which seemed to be fire-crackers connected with some ceremony, so I concluded that the cause of my worry was another celebration of the birthday of Confucius, which proved to be the case.

An hour after we pushed on at the first peep of a Sunday dawn, the long river-side wall of a large town appeared on the bank, with a new chunk of the wall rebuilt, and well rebuilt, in contrast to the jungle-grown sides of old parts of it. It recalled that the old styles still have their uses; but that we had reached the railway, that there was a railway at all, was really the only thing of importance about Shuichow. Though the city was filled with the troops of Sun Yat-sen and his mercenary allies, there was no actual fighting, and the trains were running. The "Generalissimo" had recently come up to the end of the Canton section of what we hope will some day be the Canton-Peking line, for the two purposes of protecting his bit of territory from another aggression from the North and of taking advantage of any opportunity the fighting about Shanghai and its spread to the North might give him. Though every available space, even the freight-sheds of the railway, was crowded with his soldiers, there was nothing to interfere with my

movements. No one understood real Chinese except the few who were educated or had traveled, and many of those spoke it worse than I, if I do say it myself as should n't. But one does not need to speak much to pay off a boatman, hire coolies from a wharf to a near-by station, and establish oneself for the day on one of the four wooden benches running the length of a third-class car. I knew that the trainmen would be easy-going and let me buy my ticket on the train, which saved me a long fight with the mob about the usual knee-high rat-hole through which tickets are purchased in Chinese stations, and soon I was away on the first railway I had patronize dsince reaching Yünnanfu, all but five months before—and there had been no improvement since that time.

I had taken third class, not because I wished to save money on my first railway journey of months, but because on this militarized line in the realm of Dr. Sun the first and second classes were almost entirely appropriated by soldiers and officials, and one had less freedom and space there than in the scorned coolie class. Even there uniforms and weapons swarmed, and a young man who was no doubt some sort of official but had only a badge in his pocket to prove it, and to serve as his only ticket or traveling orders, stretched out across five places on a choice part of the bench under a window and let the four travelers he displaced stand or crowd in where they could. No one dared to disturb him, and he scorned to show his substitute for a ticket until forced to do so by an unusually brave trainman. Civilians were still allowed to travel and ship their belongings on whatever space remained available, not out of pity but because Dr. Sun and his army needed the money the fares brought in.

Though they were still interesting, there was nothing particularly new about my fellow-passengers, many of whom were well above the coolie class, unless it was the father with his two small boys opposite me. One child was five and the other eight, but as often as either of them asked for a cigarette the father offered his package without hesitation, and even the younger boy lighted and smoked at least a dozen during the day, with all the studied gestures he had seen grown-ups use, holding the boon from the West between thumb and forefinger in the approved fashion of the Chinese dandy, flicking off the ashes now and then with his little finger.

As to the country out through the rumbling windows, it was rolling, with goodly hills here and there, high and rugged about Shuichow, with some fantastic lumps of rocks sticking out of the plain. But to any one with the eighteen provinces behind him there was nothing to cause

excitement. It was pleasant of course to see the fair sex trotting freely about again on uncrippled feet, even if they were as dirty and bare-footed as the men with whom they competed at the hardest labor, to see sturdy women *t'iao*-ing loads heavier than we would care to lift, to behold white-haired old ladies with muscular legs hoeing in the fields. There passed fields of sugar-cane, some real mountains not far from the railway, the gorge of a considerable river; then those great warehouse-pawnshops of Kwangtung began to rise above each village again. Half a dozen long trains crowded with soldiers and all that goes with them on a Chinese military campaign, including car-loads of field-guns, of horses, of artillery wagons, crawled past us into the north, but there were no other outward signs of immediate trouble or lack of peaceful good cheer. We passed through a district where *k'angs* of all sizes, from mere flower-pots to earthenware barrels, were made. They were piled in great cords, and coolies *t'iao*-ed them away in every direction. The villages of the region made house-walls of the broken ones, and heaps of broken bits of them lay along the paths to the long furnace stretching up a hill. Some of these jars were in hollows of the cliffs as graves. Treadmill water-wheels, run by foot, by hand, by water-buffalo, were still lifting the water into the moisture-gluttonous rice-fields—the rice still very green here, though already harvested in Hunan over the mountains to the north, perhaps because this was a third planting; all the old familiar sights of southern China were there.

Then a foreign mission school passed, the first foreigners I had seen in this province, dressed in their Sunday afternoon best, sauntering leisurely on the grassy lawns before them; the ground grew familiar as we entered that part of the line on which I had strolled; the smoking chimneys of Canton's waterworks showed up; and far off the dilapidated Five-story Pagoda on the only surviving corner of the city wall, the house in which we had lived for three months of the past winter, the crowded outskirts of the west suburb, and the even more numerous dwelling-boats of the upper river—and, almost before I realized it, a coolie was trotting away with me to Shameen.

In all the time I had spent in China I had never been more than innocently annoyed by a Chinese mob, and I had never seen another foreigner undergoing the reputedly not uncommon experience of a real mobbing. It remained for me to witness such an affair during my last night on Chinese soil—if Shameen may be called that. I had dined in real Western fashion again, patronized a bath-tub, accomplished a few

necessary errands on the peaceful little foreign-ruled island, and turned in early in what promised to be a quiet room of Shameen's insufficient foreign hotel, happy in the hope of a real night's sleep. About midnight I was slowly and laboriously recalled to consciousness by an increasing hubbub of shoutings, of Chinese feet running in their curious shuffling fashion on the foreign pavements outside, the commanding voices of several foreigners. A fire, no doubt, on the island, and the foreign volunteers giving orders to their Chinese subordinates. I turned over content to let it burn on. But the increasing hubbub turned into the flower-decked patio right beneath my third-story windows, newly surrounded, it appeared, by a building housing the Chinese police of the little foreign concession. I rose and went to the window. It was no fire at all, but something I had looked for in vain all through China,—Chinese mobbing a white man, and what was more, one of my own countrymen!

How much less respect the foreigner had in these treaty-ports than in the far interior! No doubt the recent Shameen strike, too, won by the Chinese almost all along the line, had made life even less tenable for the foreigners in Canton. But I did not hasten down to give assistance to the victim. In fact, it was not entirely clear which one of the contending parties would have answered to that name. For what seemed to have happened was that several of the Chinese policemen of Shameen Island had attempted to restrain, detain, or otherwise interfere with the God-given freedom of an American sailor, no doubt from one of the gunboats still at anchor off the island Bund and probably detected in some unlawful act of no great criminality in the vicinity of the club maintained for him and his fellows around the corner. Some twoscore Chinese evidently had come to the rescue of the policemen, and two or three Americans or Britishers seemed to have joined the party to see that he was not too unkindly handled, but they refrained, in that sportsmanlike way on which we of English speech like to pride ourselves, from lending him any fisty assistance until he might require it. Hence the scene resolved itself into gusts of unparlor-like language from the sailor, followed by calming words from the other foreigners, lost in a mingled shuffling of soft-shod feet and many shrieks, some of pain, some of anger, some of mere excitement, punctuated by sharp blows of fists on flesh; and gazing down into the court one might see repeated time after time the same scene,—the mob of Chinese rushing the sailor, his fists working like trip-hammers and a doubled-up Oriental form going down as regularly as they landed, a pause for reformation of the

defeated party, during which the sailor chatted rather rationally and in the tone of a man who was busy but not by any means too busy for the social amenities of life, and then the fray would repeat itself again. No, I did not go down; my assistance did not seem necessary, and I know that my advice would have been supercargo. I went back to bed, reflecting that perhaps there is not so much danger of the West being overwhelmed by the yellow East, for all the millions of armed Chinese in uniform, as some head-lines would have us believe, yet reflecting, as the riot gradually subsided and I drifted into sleep, that what they might lack in organization and what we understand by personal courage the yellow men make up in patience and endurance and the ability to wait centuries to attain their ends.

On the day that I bade my family au revoir and walked out of Yünnanfu on June 25, I set the night of October 5 and 6 as the one I should spend in Canton, and it was agreed that my wife would take the boat up from Hong Kong that night, leaving the rest of our party there under good British protection, and met me at Canton in the morning. It was nearly six weeks since I had had a letter, and telegraphing had proved a mere loss of time, patience, and money. But when I boarded the big steamer early next morning it was to find my wife just preparing to leave her state-room.

Soldiers still overran Canton, autos dashed up and down the Bund with petty officials lolling in the back seats, the half-dozen khaki-clad soldiers on the running-boards with cocked automatics in their hands. The stock of Dr. Sun with the people of Canton had reached its end, and he was soon virtually to flee the city, never to come back, though the outside world was not very clearly apprised of that fact. Just five days after we left China most of the west suburb in which we had lived was burned and looted, many of the people killed, the women outraged, by what has come to be known as the Red Army of Canton, for Sun described himself toward the last as a Bolshevnik, even though his followers did not see fit to bury him in the coffin sent from Moscow when, a few weeks later, he succumbed to an incurable ailment in Peking. That afternoon we took the same steamer on which my wife had come and sped down the familiar Pearl River to Hong Kong, from which we set sail across the Pacific shortly afterward.















